

June 30, 2021

President Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

We, the undersigned organizations, focus variously on human rights, civil rights and civil liberties, racial, social, and environmental justice, humanitarian approaches to foreign policy, faith-based initiatives, peacebuilding, government accountability, veterans' issues, and the protection of civilians. We write to demand an end to the unlawful program of lethal strikes outside any recognized battlefield, including through the use of drones. This program is a centerpiece of the United States' forever wars and has exacted an appalling toll on Muslim, Brown, and Black communities in multiple parts of the world. Your administration's current [review](#) of this program, and the approaching 20th anniversary of 9/11, is an opportunity to abandon this war-based approach and chart a new path forward that promotes and respects our collective human security.

Successive presidents have now claimed the unilateral power to authorize secretive extrajudicial killing outside any recognized battlefield, with no meaningful accountability for wrongful deaths and civilian lives lost and injured. This lethal strikes program is a cornerstone of the broader U.S. war-based approach, which has led to wars and other violent conflicts; hundreds of thousands dead, including significant civilian casualties; massive human displacement; and indefinite military detention and torture. It has caused lasting psychological trauma and deprived families of beloved members, as well as means of survival. In the United States, this approach has contributed to further militarized and violent approaches to domestic policing; bias-based racial, ethnic, and religious profiling in investigations, prosecutions, and watchlisting; warrantless surveillance; and epidemic rates of addiction and suicide among veterans, among other harms. It is past time to change course and start repairing the damage done.

We appreciate your stated commitments to ending "forever wars," promoting racial justice, and centering human rights in U.S. foreign policy. Disavowing and ending the lethal strikes program is both a human rights and racial justice imperative in meeting these commitments. Twenty years into a war-based approach that has undermined and violated fundamental rights, we urge you to abandon it and embrace an approach that advances our collective human security. That approach should be rooted in promoting human rights, justice, equality, dignity, peacebuilding, diplomacy, and accountability, in action as well as words.

Sincerely,

U.S.-Based Organizations

About Face: Veterans Against the War
Action Center on Race & the Economy
Alliance for Peacebuilding

Alliance of Baptists
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)
American Civil Liberties Union
American Friends Service Committee
American Muslim Bar Association (AMBA)
American Muslim Empowerment Network (AMEN)
Amnesty International USA
Beyond the Bomb
Center for Civilians in Conflict (CIVIC)
Center for Constitutional Rights
Center for Victims of Torture
CODEPINK
Columban Center for Advocacy and Outreach
Columbia Law School Human Rights Institute
Common Defense
Center for International Policy
Center for Nonviolent Solutions
Church of the Brethren, Office of Peacebuilding and Policy
CorpWatch
Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR)
Council on American-Islamic Relations (Washington Chapter)
Defending Rights & Dissent
Demand Progress Education Fund
Democracy for the Arab World Now (DAWN)
Dissenters
Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC)
Ensaaf
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Global Justice Clinic, NYU School of Law
Government Information Watch
Human Rights First
Human Rights Watch
ICNA Council for Social Justice
Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility
International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN)
Justice For Muslims Collective
Kairos Center for Religions, Rights and Social Justice
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns
Military Families Speak Out
Muslim Justice League
National Religious Campaign Against Torture
North Carolina Peace Action
Open Society Policy Center
Orange County Peace Coalition
Pax Christi USA

Peace Action
Peace Education Center
Poligon Education Fund
Presbyterian Church (USA) Office of Public Witness
Progressive Democrats of America
Project Blueprint
Queer Crescent
Rethinking Foreign Policy
RootsAction.org
Saferworld (Washington Office)
Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference
September 11th Families for Peaceful Tomorrows
ShelterBox USA
South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT)
Sunrise Movement
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
United for Peace and Justice
University Network for Human Rights
US Campaign for Palestinian Rights
Veterans for American Ideals (VFAI)
Veterans For Peace
Western New York Pax Christi
Win Without War
Women for Afghan Women
Women for Weapons Trade Transparency
Women Watch Afrika
Women's Action for New Directions
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom US

Internationally-Based Organizations

AFARD-MALI (Mali)
Alf Ba Civilian and Coexistence Foundation (Yemen)
Allamin Foundation for Peace and Development (Nigeria)
BUCOFORE (Chad)
Building Blocks for Peace Foundation (Nigeria)
Campaña Colombiana Contra Minas (Colombia)
Centre for Democracy and Development (Nigeria)
Center for Policy Analysis of Horn of Africa (Somaliland)
Conciliation Resources (United Kingdom)
Defence for Human Rights (Yemen)
Digital Shelter (Somalia)
Drone Wars UK
European Center for Constitutional and Human Rights
Foundation for Fundamental Rights (Pakistan)
Heritage Institute for Somali Studies (Somalia)

Initiatives for International Dialogue (Philippines)
International Association for Political Science Students (IAPSS)
IRIAD (Italy)
Justice Project Pakistan
Lawyers for Justice in Libya (LFJL)
Mareb Girls Foundation (Yemen)
Mwatana for Human Rights (Yemen)
National Organization for Development Society (Yemen)
National Partnership of Children and Youth in Peacebuilding (Democratic Republic of the Congo)
PAX (Netherlands)
Peace Direct (United Kingdom)
Peace Initiative Network (Nigeria)
Peace Training and Research Organisation (PTRO) (Afghanistan)
Reprieve (United Kingdom)
Shadow World Investigations (United Kingdom)
Witness Somalia
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)
World BEYOND War
Yemeni Youth Forum for Peace
The Youth Cafe (Kenya)
Youth for Peace and Development (Zimbabwe)