



Home > Interviews

» [Back to Story](#) [Email](#) [Print](#)



'US drone strikes counterproductive, illegal'

Interview with Edward Corrigan, international lawyer from London, Ontario

Mon Sep 10, 2012 2:58PM GMT

Interview with Edward Corrigan, international lawyer from London, Ontario

Mon Sep 10, 2012 2:58PM GMT

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Hina Rabbani Khar has called on the US to immediately end its "unlawful" and "counterproductive" assassination drone strikes in her country.

The foreign minister made the statement in an interview with Press TV, after arriving in the Iranian capital Tehran for the 16th summit of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM).

The killing of Pakistani civilians, including women and children, in drone strikes has strained relations between Islamabad and Washington, prompting Pakistani officials to send warnings to the US administration over the assaults.

The UN and the Pakistani government have condemned the US use of combat drones as a blatant violation of international law.

Washington claims that the unmanned aircraft target militants and their strongholds, but victims of such attacks have been predominantly civilians.

Press TV has conducted an interview with Edward Corrigan, international lawyer from London, Ontario, to further discuss the issue. The following is a rough transcription of the interview.

Press TV: So far the UN has not done much against the US' drone attacks in Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia except for threatening it with an investigation. The US insists upon the legality of the strikes, both internationally and constitutionally speaking, but does it have a case, in your opinion?

Corrigan: The United States has no case. You can't just go and extra-judicially murder or kill people. There has to be due process. There has to be a legal basis upon which to intervene in the area. They have to be under your jurisdiction, for example.

In my opinion, the United States has no right to go into Yemen or Pakistan or any other country and start killing people by remote control. There's no legal basis for it.

Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, other human rights organizations have condemned the action.

The other point is that it's really counterproductive from the American point of view if you're calling in drone strikes by remote control even if it's "a legitimate target." You end up killing innocent civilians and you tend antagonizing the population. You

make people angry. You, in fact, facilitate people to join organizations that are opposed to it.

In fact, there's increasing international condemnation which are to these drone attacks, which are clearly outside of the bounds of international law or even American domestic law. Americans have actually killed two, several Americans by drone strikes without having any basis.

It's kind of like the American police just going up -- oh, we think this person is a terrorist -- and shooting him or killing him without any formal charges, investigations, without any due process, without a chance for the person to answer the allegation against them.

It's clearly contrary to American law, international law; and in fact, it's absurd to try to defend these remote control drones against people around the world in Pakistan, Yemen and other places.

There's been no formal declaration of war and in my opinion there's been no legal basis whatsoever to justify these attacks. In fact, I think they would be considered war crimes, international crimes and crimes against humanity for this type of abhorrent behavior.

Press TV: Speaking of which, though, even though Obama does talk about eliminating targets without charge, without trial -- in essence, as you've mentioned, without due process with these drones - speaking to CNN earlier, Obama did stress upon the US' commitment to "due process." Isn't that a contradiction in terms?

Corrigan: It's an expressed contradiction. You cannot just kill someone and then say, 'Oh, we're committed to due process'. They're even killing Americans which are protected under the American Constitution and due process.

Even Obama says as a former law professor, he knows that there are legal procedures that have to be done by a government. No government has the right to just kill people at random and say, 'Oh, we think they're terrorists', or they're about to do something, or even their pattern of behavior indicates they may be a threat to us.

It's simply a legal absurdity and I think a political absurdity to try and defend these actions. It's clearly is anger from this situation.

There's no legal, moral or political basis for going in and just killing people that you think may represent a threat to you. That would give them and many other countries the right to go in and start launching drone attacks against the United States, killing people.

The Americans have even targeted somebody then targeted the people who went in to rescue them, and even targeted the funerals. This is totally abhorrent, illegal behavior and cannot be justified under any circumstances from a legal point of view.

GMA/SS

--

-

0

Like 3
