

The Inquiry that I am launching today is a direct response to the requests made to me by States at the Human Rights Council last June, as well as to the increasing international concern surrounding the issue of remote targeted killing through the use of UAVs. The exponential rise

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Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and particularly the provisions of Article 6 which protects the right to life, permit the use of lethal force only where it is strictly necessary as a matter of immediate self-defence. Under this analysis States wishing to take action against suspected terrorists located outside a recognised situation of international armed conflict must first try to effect an arrest, and may use lethal force only if the person they are seeking resists arrest and it proves strictly necessary to use firearms.

At the other end of the spectrum the analysis that has been promoted by

whether tacit consent or acquiescence is sufficient; on whether the deployment of remote targeting technology in such circumstances amounts to a violation of the sovereignty of the State on whose territory it is used; and on whether it may nonetheless be lawful if the State concerned is either unwilling or unable to tackle the terrorist threat posed by an insurgent group operating on its territory.

The absence of consensus on these very fundamental questions of international law is the focus of intense debate at the United Nations at the moment, and will form the subject of a series of high-level discussions and negotiations between States and experts over the coming year, aimed at bridging these very different points of view. The reality here is that the world is facing a new technological development which is not easily accommodated within the existing legal frameworks, and none of the analyses that have been floated is entirely satisfactory or comprehensive. And they may differ in their app

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My mandate has received a large number of communication complaints relating to individual strikes, and my staff in Geneva has begun the process of looking into certain incidents. In order to formulate recommendations to the General Assembly on this issue, I have identified a small team of experts to assist me in identifying instances in which it is plausibly alleged that targeted killing operations of this nature have resulted in civilian casualties, and in conducting a critical examination of the available evidence. We propose to focus on 25 cases studies from Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan and the OPT

NGO's. I will also be consulting directly with the relevant States through my office in Geneva. I expect to conduct a number of country visits, including visits to Pakistan, Yemen and the Sahel.

The second phase, which will run from the end of May until the end of July is the consultation phase, during which I will seek the views and responses of the relevant States on the particular case studies that the Inquiry has focussed upon.

The inquiry team that will be assisting me is **Abdul-Ghani Al-Iryani**, a political analyst and development consultant in Yemen, who currently leads the Democratic Awakening Movement, a trans-partisan political

From my initial communications with relevant States I have grounds to be optimistic that the inquiry will receive good co-operation from the governments of Pakistan, Yemen, the United States and the United Kingdom.