

ACLU Comment on EO Revoking Requirement to Release Casualty Numbers from Lethal Strikes Abroad

By [ACLU](#)

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President Trump today [issued an executive order](#) revoking a 2016 executive order provision requiring the government to release annual statistics on drone and other lethal strikes overseas. The 2016 order required the government to disclose the number of strikes as well as the number of combatants and non-combatants killed in counterterrorism operations “away from areas of active hostilities.”

Hina Shamsi, director of the American Civil Liberties Union’s National Security Project, issued the following statement in response:

“President Trump has already weakened rules that sought to limit civilian deaths caused by this country’s illegal and immoral lethal force program, in which it kills suspects in places where we are not at war. This order now shrouds those killings in even greater secrecy.

“Trump’s decision to increase secrecy about the United States’ killing of people abroad is deeply wrong and dangerous for public accountability. Trump revoked a transparency order that provided an imperfect but still important official record of deaths caused by the military and, critically, the CIA. This decision will hide from the public the government’s own tally of the total number of deaths it causes every year in its lethal force program. Now, the government is also no longer committed to providing reasons why its total death count is different from independent credible reports by media and rights groups.”

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