

Under Trump, US Doubles Drone Strikes in Somalia

The Trump administration has loosened the rules of engagement allowing it to carry out more deadly drone strikes in Somalia and Yemen.

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The United States said Wednesday it had carried out a new drone strike in Somalia, killing 13 extremist al-Shabab militants, bringing the number of drone strikes on the country to 34 this year, more than double the number the previous year.

The Africa U.S. command said that its drone strike took place Sunday and was in coordination with the Somalian government.

Since President Donald Trump took office in January the United States has ramped up operations in Somalia after his administration loosened the rules of engagement in March.

Al-Shabab was blamed for the October truck bombing in Somalia's capital, Mogadishu, that killed 512 people. Only a few attacks since 9/11 have left a higher death toll.

The U.S. military has been also carrying out drone strikes in other part of the Middle East, most notably in Yemen, where Saudi Arabia is also engaged in a military intervention against the Houthi rebel government.

In fact despite the humanitarian crisis and the ongoing Saudi-led war in Yemen, the Trump administration has increased the strikes there by three folds this year compared to 2016 under the previous administration. More than 120 bombs have been dropped on Yemen as part of the U.S.'s decades-long so called "war on terror".

U.S. drones also carry out strikes in several other countries including Afghanistan, Pakistan, Libya and recently in Niger.

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