

# Letter to the Speaker of the House and President Pro Tempore of the Senate Regarding the War Powers Report

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December 07, 2021

## Briefing Room

### • Statements and Releases

Dear Madam Speaker: (Dear Mr. President:)

I am providing this supplemental consolidated report, prepared by my Administration and consistent with the War Powers Resolution (Public Law 93-148), as part of my efforts to keep the Congress informed about deployments of United States Armed Forces equipped for combat.

## MILITARY OPERATIONS IN SUPPORT OF UNITED STATES COUNTERTERRORISM EFFORTS

In furtherance of counterterrorism efforts, the United States continues to work with partners around the globe, with a particular focus on the United States Central and Africa Commands' areas of responsibility. In this context, the United States has deployed forces to conduct counterterrorism operations and to advise, assist, and accompany security forces of select foreign partners on counterterrorism operations. In the majority of these locations, the mission of United States military personnel is to facilitate counterterrorism operations of foreign partner forces and does not include routine engagement in combat. In many of these locations, the security environment is such that United States military personnel may be required to defend themselves against threats or attacks, and, to that end, the United States may deploy United States military personnel with weapons and other appropriate equipment for force protection. Specific information about counterterrorism deployments to select countries is provided below, and a classified annex to this report provides further information.

### Military Operations Conducted Pursuant to the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force and in Support of Related United States Counterterrorism Objectives

Since October 7, 2001, United States Armed Forces, including Special Operations Forces, have conducted counterterrorism combat operations, including against al-Qa'ida and associated forces. Since August 2014, these operations have included targeting the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), also known as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which was formerly known as al-Qa'ida in Iraq. In support of these and other overseas operations, the United States has deployed combat-equipped forces to several locations in the United States Central, European, Africa, Southern, and Indo-Pacific Commands' areas of responsibility. Such operations and deployments have

been reported previously, consistent with Public Law 107-40, Public Law 107-243, the War Powers Resolution, and other statutes. These ongoing operations, which the United States has carried out with the assistance of numerous international partners, have been successful in seriously degrading ISIS capabilities in Syria and Iraq. If necessary, in response to terrorist threats, I will direct additional measures to protect the people and interests of the United States. It is not possible to know at this time the precise scope or the duration of the deployments of United States Armed Forces that are or will be necessary to counter terrorist threats to the United States.

**Afghanistan.** On April 14, 2021, I directed the withdrawal of United States forces from Afghanistan. That withdrawal was completed by August 31, 2021. The United States has relocated counterterrorism capabilities outside Afghanistan and remains postured to address threats to the United States homeland and United States interests that may arise from inside Afghanistan.

**Iraq and Syria.** As part of a comprehensive strategy to defeat ISIS, United States Armed Forces are working by, with, and through local partners in conducting airstrikes and other necessary operations against ISIS forces in Iraq and Syria and against al-Qa'ida in Syria. A small presence of United States Armed Forces remains in strategically significant locations in Syria to conduct operations, in partnership with indigenous ground forces, to address continuing terrorist threats emanating from Syria. United States Armed Forces in Iraq continue to advise, assist, and enable select elements of the Iraqi security forces, including Iraqi Kurdish security forces. United States Armed Forces also provide limited support to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) mission in Iraq. Actions in Iraq are being undertaken in coordination with the Government of Iraq and the Kurdistan Regional Government, and in conjunction with Coalition partners. As noted in the July 26, 2021, Joint Statement on the United States-Iraq Strategic Dialogue, the United States security relationship with Iraq will fully transition to a training, advising, assisting, and intelligence-sharing role, and there will be no United States forces with a combat role in Iraq after December 31, 2021.

As reported in June 2021, I directed targeted strikes against facilities at two locations in Syria and one location in Iraq near the Iraq-Syria border. These facilities were used by Iran-backed militia groups that were involved in a series of attacks against United States personnel and facilities in Iraq. These attacks had escalated in the months leading up to the strikes and injured and threatened the lives of United States and Coalition personnel. I directed this action consistent with my responsibility to protect United States citizens both at home and abroad and in furtherance of United States national security interests, pursuant to my constitutional authority to conduct United States foreign relations and as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive.

**Arabian Peninsula Region.** A small number of United States military personnel are deployed to Yemen to conduct operations against al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS. The United States military continues to work closely with the Government of the Republic of Yemen and regional partner forces to degrade the terrorist threat posed by those groups.

As reported previously, I directed an end to the United States support for the Saudi-led Coalition's offensive military operations against the Houthis in Yemen. United States Armed Forces, in a non-combat role, continue to provide military advice and limited information to regional forces for defensive and training purposes only as they relate to the Saudi-led Coalition's campaign against the Houthis in Yemen. Such support does not involve United States Armed Forces in hostilities with the Houthis for the purposes of the War Powers Resolution.

United States Armed Forces are deployed to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to protect United States forces and interests in the region against hostile action by Iran and Iran-backed groups. These forces, operating in coordination with the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, provide air and missile defense capabilities and support the operation of United States fighter aircraft. The total number of United States forces in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is approximately 2,120.

**Jordan.** At the request of the Government of Jordan, approximately 3,147 United States military personnel are deployed to Jordan to support Counter-ISIS operations, to enhance Jordan's security, and to promote regional stability.

**Lebanon.** At the request of the Government of Lebanon, approximately 91 United States military personnel are deployed to Lebanon to enhance the government's counterterrorism capabilities and to support the counterterrorism operations of Lebanese security forces.

**Turkey.** United States Armed Forces remain deployed to Turkey, at the Turkish government's request, to support Counter-ISIS operations and to enhance Turkey's security.

**East Africa Region.** United States Armed Forces based outside Somalia continue to counter the terrorist threat posed by ISIS and al-Shabaab, an associated force of al-Qa'ida, in Somalia. Since the last periodic report, United States forces have conducted a small number of airstrikes against al-Shabaab in defense of our Somali partner forces, and remain prepared to conduct airstrikes against ISIS and al-Shabaab terrorists. United States military personnel conduct periodic engagements in Somalia to train, advise, and assist regional forces, including Somali and African Union Mission in Somalia forces, during counterterrorism operations. United States Armed Forces are deployed to Kenya to support counterterrorism operations in East Africa. United States military personnel continue to partner with the Government of Djibouti, which has permitted use of Djiboutian territory for basing of United States Armed Forces. United States military personnel remain deployed to Djibouti, including for purposes of staging for counterterrorism and counter-piracy operations in the vicinity of the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula, and to provide contingency support for embassy security augmentation in East Africa, as necessary.

**Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region.** United States military personnel in the Lake Chad Basin and Sahel Region continue to conduct airborne intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance operations and to provide support to African and European partners

conducting counterterrorism operations in the region, including by advising, assisting, and accompanying these partner forces. Approximately 831 United States military personnel remain deployed to Niger.

**Cuba.** United States Armed Forces continue to conduct humane and secure detention operations for detainees held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, under the authority provided by the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (Public Law 107-40), as informed by the law of war. There are 39 such detainees as of the date of this report.

**Philippines.** United States Armed Forces deployed to the Philippines are providing support to the counterterrorism operations of the armed forces of the Philippines.

#### MILITARY OPERATIONS IN EGYPT IN SUPPORT OF THE MULTINATIONAL FORCE AND OBSERVERS

Approximately 426 United States military personnel are assigned to or are supporting the United States contingent of the Multinational Force and Observers, which have been present in Egypt since 1981.

#### UNITED STATES AND NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION OPERATIONS IN KOSOVO

The United States continues to contribute forces to the Kosovo Force (KFOR), led by NATO in cooperation with local authorities, bilateral partners, and international institutions, to deter renewed hostilities in Kosovo. Approximately 561 United States military personnel are among KFOR's approximately 4,000 personnel.

I have directed the participation of United States Armed Forces in all of the above-described operations pursuant to my constitutional and statutory authority as Commander in Chief and as Chief Executive (including the authority to carry out Public Law 107-40, Public Law 107-243, and other statutes), as well as my constitutional and statutory authority to conduct the foreign relations of the United States. Officials of my Administration and I communicate regularly with congressional leadership, relevant congressional committees, and other Members of Congress with regard to these deployments, and we will continue to do so.

Sincerely,

JOSEPH R. BIDEN JR.