# KG March 18’ AFF

**We Affirm- Resolved: On balance, the current Authorization for Use of Military Force gives too much power to the president.**

## Our Sole Contention Is: Playing with Fire

**Gude at The Center for American Progress writes that the AUMF givers authorization to the president to use special operations forces and airstrikes without geographic limitations or a time restraint.**

**Gude**, Ken. “Understanding Authorizations for the Use of Military Force.” Center for American Progress, 24 Sept. **2014**, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/security/reports/2014/09/24/97748/understanding-authorizations-for-the-use-of-military-force/>

Second, Congress is within its power to define the nature of U.S. military engagement against ISIS. President Obama has repeatedly pledged that no U.S. ground troops would be involved in this military campaign. **To ensure that no large-scale U.S. combat forces are deployed, the AUMF could authorize President Obama to deploy specific capabilities against ISIS. These would most likely involve air power and special operations forces for specific missions such as assisting airstrikes**, training and advising local forces, or providing support to protect Americans who are directly threatened by ISIS forces. Congressional approval for these missions should include a requirement that the president seek additional authority for the long-term deployment of regular ground forces. This would be distinct from last week’s vote in Congress to authorize the U.S. military to provide training and military equipment to the Syrian rebels in their fight against ISIS and the Assad regime. Additionally, the AUMF should include a geographic scope placing boundaries on the areas where the president is permitted to use force. When combating a nation-state, the geographic limits are understood, but a non-state actor such as ISIS can slip across multiple international borders. Consequently, Congress should define a geographic scope in Iraq and Syria to provide clarity about the military mission to the American people. It should acknowledge that ISIS could move across another recognized border and allow for use of force in areas outside of Iraq and Syria with congressional notification within 30 days. At that point, Congress can determine whether it is necessary to amend the original scope of the authorization to include the new area of operation.

**In the status quo, this blank check on war occurs in two ways.**

**A. Part A is Yemen. Keller of T&P writes that the AUMF has been used to justify an unauthorized war in Yemen and U.S. intervention in the area. Moore of Newsweek confirms that special U.S. forces have conducted multiple ground operations and more than 120 strikes since 2017. Problematically, Wilkinson of The Hill finds that the war in Yemen would not have been propagated without American involvement as it provides weapons and targeting troops. Yemen is a tipping point to give the president almost unlimited unilateral power, as Wilkinson furthers that engagement in Yemen isn’t justified under any part of the AUMF as it doesn’t fall under a terror group posing a threat to the West. However, Fang of The Intercept finds that all legislation to stop the war in Yemen has been struck down by the President under the justification of the AUMF, stopping the legislative branch from taking any action.**

**Keller**, Jared. “The US Military Is Waging The Wrong War In Yemen.” **Task & Purpose**, 13 Oct. **2017**, [taskandpurpose.com/unconstitutional-war-yemen-saudi-arabia/](https://taskandpurpose.com/unconstitutional-war-yemen-saudi-arabia/)

On Oct. 11, a bipartisan trio of lawmakers made up of Reps. Ro Khanna of Pennsylvania, Mark Pocan of Wisconsin — both on the House Armed Services Committee — and Walter Jones of North Carolina authored a scathing call for Congress to reclaim its oversight responsibilities for American war-making, too long abdicated to the White House and Pentagon since the passage of the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force. **Since 2002, the U.S. government has used the AUMF to justify counterterrorism deployments and foreign military training against al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula in Yemen, an unauthorized military engagement pursued “for political purposes” with the Saudis, the lawmakers allege. “There’s a good reason that the Constitution reserves for Congress the right to declare war — a clause taken in modern times as forbidding the president from pursuing an unauthorized war in the absence of an actual or imminent threat to the nation**,” they wrote. “Clearly, the founders’ intent was to prevent precisely the kind of dangerous course we’re charting.”

**Moore**, Jack. “The Pentagon Has Confirmed U.S. Boots on the Ground against ISIS and Al-Qaeda.” **Newsweek**, 21 Dec. **2017**, <http://www.newsweek.com/yemen-pentagon-confirms-boots-ground-against-isis-and-al-qaeda-754960>

**Elite U.S. forces are operating on the ground in Yemen against the Islamic State militant group (ISIS) and Al-Qaeda, the Pentagon confirmed on Wednesday. “U.S. forces have conducted multiple ground operations and more than 120 strikes in 2017**,” U.S. Central Command in Tampa, Florida, said in a statement. The Department of Defense warned that ISIS, which has lost the majority of its territory in Iraq and Syria, has doubled in size in the country. The militant group has capitalized on a two-year insurgency by the Shiite Houthi rebels who overthrew the Saudi-backed Sunni government in March 2015. Keep Up With This Story And More By Subscribing Now The rebels killed former Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh earlier this month after he initiated talks with the Saudi-led coalition leading a bombing campaign in the country. The ground operations have been taking place with the aim of disrupting “the ability of Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula and ISIS-Yemen to use ungoverned spaces in Yemen as a hub for terrorist recruiting, training and base of operations to export terror worldwide.” **The number of U.S. troops operating in Yemen remains unclear, but the Pentagon has acknowledged that a small number of American troops have aided an operation to clear the central Yemeni region of Shabweh from Al-Qaeda militants, alongside the forces of the United Arab Emirates, which is backing the internationally recognized Sunni government in the country with Saudi Arabia.**

**Wilkerson**, Lawrence. “Congress, End America's Role in Saudi Arabia's War in Yemen.” **TheHill**, 12 Oct. **2017**, [thehill.com/opinion/national-security/355118-congress-end-americas-war-in-saudi-arabias-war-in-yemen](http://thehill.com/opinion/criminal-justice/375511-the-second-amendment-is-a-human-right-ignorance-toward-it-is)

This horrific situation is the result of Saudi/UAE bombing of roads, hospitals, bridges, water and sewage facilities, and the main port of Hodeida combined with a Saudi/UAE naval and air blockade that prevents large-scale humanitarian assistance from reaching the Yemeni war victims. **The Saudi/UAE coalition could not execute the war without U.S. direct involvement — specifically the refueling of their planes carrying out the bombing — and the further assistance of providing bombs and targeting intelligence.** Even apart from the need to halt this growing humanitarian disaster, Congress has a Constitutional obligation to deal with U.S. participation in this war. **Flatly stated, U.S. participation is illegal. When President Barack Obama ordered U.S. involvement, the Saudi-led war was not covered by the Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) issued by Congress in the wake of 9/11. The Houthis and the forces of former Yemeni president Saleh against whom the Saudi coalition is engaged are not affiliated with al Qaeda or any other entity associated with the 9/11 terror attacks.**

**Fang**, Lee. “Watch Members of Congress Attempt to Explain Why They Won't Vote on War in Yemen.” **The Intercept**, 7 Nov. **2017**, [theintercept.com/2017/11/07/watch-members-of-congress-attempt-to-explain-why-they-wont-vote-on-war-in-yemen/](https://theintercept.com/2017/11/07/watch-members-of-congress-attempt-to-explain-why-they-wont-vote-on-war-in-yemen/)

**Several members of Congress indicated an interest in the issue, noting that the Obama and Trump administrations’ reliance on the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force to justify U.S. involvement in the conflict is absurd**. That authorization, after all, was designed to fight the terrorist groups responsible for the September 11 attacks, not to intervene in Yemen’s civil war. **For 16 years, the executive branch has pointed to the AUMF as legal justification for its involvement in conflicts across the Middle East and Africa, a strategy that is legally questionable.** But the use of the AUMF in the Yemeni context is especially bizarre given that the AUMF’s target is Al Qaeda, and the group AQAP — Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula –is fighting alongside the U.S.-Saudi coalition against the Houthi rebels. Other lawmakers quickly dismissed The Intercept’s questions on the issue. Rep. Dave Reichert, R-Wash., for example, said he is more concerned with tax reform than voting on the war in Yemen. **One bipartisan legislative attempt to force a vote on authorization for the war, H.Con.Res.81, faced a major setback last week after appearing to gain political momentum. On November 1, lawmakers stripped the bill of its privileged status, meaning the bill no longer maintains a fast-track to a floor vote.** The legislation was designed to invoke the War Powers Act of 1973 to terminate U.S. involvement in the Yemen War. Because the bill is no longer privileged, it will head back to the the House Foreign Affairs Committee, which is led by Rep. Ed Royce, R-Calif., a lawmaker who has expressed deep support for the Saudi-led military campaign. Few expect the legislation to move forward now that it is back in Royce’s domain. In April, the representative read a statement of support for the Saudi-led campaign in Yemen and entered into the congressional record an opinion column written by a Saudi general.

**The overstepping of boundaries by the President to intervene has three impacts.**

**1) First is costing lives. Al Jazeera quantifies that almost ten thousand civilians have died in the Yemen conflict in the last two years since U.S. intervention began. Unfortunately, Pillar of The National Interest furthers that as a direct and indirect result of U.S. involvement, the civilian casualties have escalated to averaging 13 deaths a day.**

Jazeera, Al. “Death Toll in Yemen Conflict Passes 10,000.” Yemen News | **Al Jazeera**, Al Jazeera, 17 Jan. **2017**, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/2017/01/death-toll-yemen-conflict-passes-10000-170117040849576.html>

**The United Nations' humanitarian aid official in Yemen has said that the civilian death toll in the nearly two-year conflict has reached 10,000, with 40,000 others wounded. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs' Jamie McGoldrick said that the figure is based on lists of victims gathered by health facilities and the actual number might be higher.** McGoldrick also said that up to 10 million people need "urgent assistance to protect their safety, dignity and basic rights", according to a separate social media post early on Tuesday. READ MORE: Yemen's orphans face 'catastrophe' as fighting rages The announcement marks the first time a UN official has confirmed such a high death toll in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest nation. "This once more underscores the need to resolve the situation in Yemen without any further delay," UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said in New York.

**Pillar**, Paul R., et al. “Entanglement in Yemen and the Logic of War.” **The National Interest**, The Center for the National Interest, 14 Oct. **2016**, [nationalinterest.org/blog/paul-pillar/entanglement-yemen-the-logic-war-18045](http://nationalinterest.org/blog/paul-pillar/entanglement-yemen-the-logic-war-18045)

**We are seeing today in Yemen a demonstration of how easily a supposedly limited U.S. involvement in an armed conflict becomes less limited, and how such involvement creates new enemies of the United States. The deleterious entanglement of the United States in civil war in Yemen was already a major problem even before the events of the past week. The United States has associated itself with, and been providing indirect support to, the Saudi-led military intervention in Yemen. That intervention, especially through largely indiscriminate aerial bombardment, has been responsible for most of the severe civilian suffering in Yemen.** Since the Saudi air assault began last year, **civilian casualties have been averaging 13 per day.** Total civilian deaths in the war are approaching 4,000, with many more injured and still more homeless. The Saudi role in causing most of this damage and the U.S. role in facilitating it certainly undercut any criticism by those governments of Russia’s role in causing civilian suffering in Syria.

**2) Second is causing famine. Depretris of The Los Angeles Times writes because the United States has overextended itself into Yemen, the conflict has intensified, leading to 60 percent of the Yemeni population suffering from hunger, leading to 20 million people at risk of dying of starvation. This is why the UN concludes that Yemen is the world’s largest humanitarian crisis.**

**Depretris,** Daniel. “The U.S. Is Enabling Civil War and a Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen. Isn't It Time Congress Had a Say in Our Involvement?” **Los Angeles Times**, Los Angeles Times, 9 Oct. **2017**, <http://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-depetris-yemen-war-powers-resolution-20171009-story.html>

The ongoing civil war in Yemen was instigated by the region's major powers, with Iran on one side and a Saudi Arabia-led coalition of Persian Gulf states on the other. The fighting — especially airstrikes by Saudi and United Arab Emirates pilots — has devastated Yemen, one of the Arab world's poorest nations. **It has created what three U.N. agencies call "the world's largest humanitarian crisis": Sixty percent of the Yemeni population is "food insecure"; 700,000 have been infected with cholera, a deadly disease spread by a lack of clean water and sanitation. There are plenty of man-made catastrophes around the world today, but the conflict in Yemen is unique because the United States is not a bystander or neutral arbiter. We have gone along for the ride**, providing indirect military assistance on the Saudi side.Without congressional authorization — and without a peep from the leaders of either party — **the Obama and Trump administrations made the U.S. a participant.** Now a bipartisan group of House members is invoking the War Powers Act of 1973 and demanding that Congress either support our involvement in Yemen or direct the president to end it.

Over the weekend, international aid agencies warned that some 20 million people were imminently at risk of dying of starvation or poverty-related diseases in Yemen and a number of African countries, all of which are facing critical food shortages. In Yemen alone, Save the Children counts 20.7 million people, half of them children, in dire need of aid. Meanwhile, a cholera epidemic is raging through the parts of Yemen hit hardest by the war, with at least 360,000 suspected cases and perhaps as many as 425,000. Some 2,000 people have already died in the epidemic, and the number of cases is rising by some 7,000 a day.

**3) Third is by destroying infrastructure. Watson of The Atlantic quantifies that U.S. funded airstrikes have led to damage on non-military targets, leaving only 45 percent of Yemen’s medical facilities operating and bombing electrical and water control more than 100 times. This is why Watson finds 1 million people in Yemen have cholera. Critically, the WHO notes that untreated cholera has a 50 percent fatality rate.**

**Watson**, Ben. “The War in Yemen and the Making of a Chaos State.” **The Atlantic**, Atlantic Media Company, 3 Feb. **2018**, <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2018/02/the-war-in-yemen-and-the-making-of-a-chaos-state/551987/>

**Nearly a third of the U.S.- Saudi-led coalition airstrikes have hit what local observers at the Yemen Data Project, an independent group that collects information on the war, call “non-military” targets. That category includes marketplaces, water and electricity sites, food storage, hospitals, medical centers, mosques and all those kind of things**, Craig said. **“Less than 45 percent of Yemen’s medical facilities are now operating because of the conflict. People can’t, a lot of the time, afford to get there.” Since the war began in March 2015, Saudi aircraft have bombed water and electrical infrastructure more than 100 times. Beyond that, “there have been 68 air raids that have targeted medical facilities**; 183 that have targeted marketplaces,”Craig said. **Coupled with neglected city streets and poor sanitation, Yemen’s cholera epidemic—one of the worst ever recorded, with roughly one million infected—has placed an unsustainable strain on not just the country, but nearly all of its crisis-response groups.**

“Cholera: Mechanism for Control and Prevention.” WHO, **World Health Organization**, <http://www.who.int/cholera/technical/secretariat_report/en/>

Cholera is an acute enteric infection characterized by profuse vomiting and acute watery diarrhoea caused by ingestion of the bacterium Vibrio cholerae serogroup O1 or O139. The infection can lead within hours to severe dehydration and death. **If untreated, the case-fatality rate can reach 50%,** but with timely and adequate treatment, that rate will remain below 1%. In 80% of cases patients recover when treated only with oral rehydration salts; between 10% and 20% of patients need administration of intravenous fluids for rehydration.

**4) Fourth is by increasing terrorism. Schmitt of The New York Times finds that Al-Qaeda “exploits the conflict in Yemen and secure areas of safe haven”, which is why it has doubled in size in Yemen since U.S. began to intervene. Furthermore, Hoffman of Georgetown University writes that Al Qaeda offshoots have quadrupled in power as well.**

**Schmitt**, Eric, and Saeed Al-batati. “The U.S. Has Pummeled Al Qaeda in Yemen. But the Threat Is Barely Dented.” **The New York Times**, The New York Times, 30 Dec. **2017**, <http://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/30/world/middleeast/yemen-al-qaeda-us-terrorism.html>

Lora Shiao, the acting director of intelligence for the National Counterterrorism Center, told **a Senate hearing this month that the Qaeda branch “continues to exploit the conflict in Yemen to gain new recruits and secure areas of safe haven, contributing to its enduring threat.” Al Qaeda is not the only terrorist group seeking to take advantage of the turmoil in Yemen. An affiliate of the Islamic State there has doubled in size in the past year, according to the Central Command.** When asked at the same Senate hearing this month which failed state offered the best location for a terrorist group, Mark E. Mitchell, a senior Pentagon official overseeing Special Operations policy, told lawmakers, “First of all would be Yemen.” Yemen specialists say it is not at all clear that the escalating use of military force in the country is tied to any wider counterterrorism approach that draws on diplomacy, humanitarian and stabilization efforts, and cooperation on intelligence sharing and law enforcement that can make for sustainable gains against Al Qaeda. **“I’m worried that this is a military effort, however effective it may be, divorced from a broader strategic approach**,” said Joshua A. Geltzer, who was senior director for counterterrorism at the National Security Council during the Obama administration. Mr. Rasmussen explained that while the military campaign had put pressure on the Qaeda network in Yemen, the lack of a government to work with had hampered efforts. “I still feel we’re lacking a lot of that right now,” Mr. Rasmussen said. “We’ve lost a lot of insight into what happens on the ground in Yemen.”

In Yemen, al-Qaeda has taken advantage of the bloody conflict there to further strengthen its already strong affiliate, al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). **According to US State Department figures, AQAP’s strength quadrupled between 2015 and 2016, from 1,000 members to 4,000**. This is the al-Qaeda group that analysts believe poses the most direct threat to the West: It planned three attacks on US targets between 2009 and 2012, and is home to master bombmaker Ibrahim Hassan Tali al-Asiri.

**B. Part B is Somalia. Bertrand of Business Insider writes that the AUMF has been used to bypass Congress to wage war in Somalia, pushing the U.S. to the slippery slope of a never-ending conflict against Al-Shabab and Al-Qaeda. Moreover, Moore of Newsweek reports that Trump has doubled the number of troops and airstrikes in Somalia. These acts drop all forms of checks and balances and make the President all powerful, as Mazzetti of The New York Times finds that because of the AUMFs broad wording, Congress is in a state of ‘legislative paralysis’, where Congress cannot act and is forced to concede to the President and his choices. Mazzetti furthers this has paved the way for the executive branch to create unauthorized war at will, as is the case in Somalia.**

**Bertrand**, Natasha. “Obama Quietly Expanded the US' War on Terror - and Many Fear It Could Give Trump More Power.” **Business Insider**, Business Insider, 1 Dec. **2016**, <http://www.businessinsider.com/obama-aumf-trump-al-shabab-2016-11>

**The Obama administration recently expanded a 15-year-old congressional authorization for the use of military force (AUMF) to include members of the African Islamist militant group al-Shabab,** The New York Times reported earlier this week. The AUMF was passed shortly after the September 11, 2001, terror attacks, authorizing the US military to wage a global war on Al Qaeda and "associated forces" — **a provision that has allowed the Obama administration to bypass new authorization from Congress for operations targeting militants in Libya, Yemen, and now, Somalia. Obama's characterization of the Islamic State — and now, of al-Shabab — as an "associated force" of Al Qaeda has been controversial, with many experts warning that it is a slippery slope to a forever war.** "The potential for the war to expand around the world cries out for a genuine expiration date," Ryan Goodman, an expert on international law and member of the Council on Foreign Relations, wrote last year. "The next administration should know that it will have to justify its own choices when the time comes for renewal." Some analysts fear, however, that the incoming administration of President-elect Donald Trump will inherit vastly expanded war powers under Obama's elasticized AUMF. They say it could encourage Trump to preserve the tradition of bypassing congressional approval for combat operations against Islamists. **"It's crazy that a piece of legislation that was grounded specifically in the experience of 9/11 is now being repurposed for close air support for regional security forces in Somalia," Micah Zenko, a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, told The New York Times**

**Moore**, Jack. “Trump Doubles U.S. Forces in Somalia, to the Highest Level since Black Hawk Down.” **Newsweek**, 20 Nov. **2017**, <http://www.newsweek.com/trump-doubles-us-forces-somalia-fight-isis-and-al-shabab-most-black-hawk-down-716923>

**The Trump administration has more than doubled the number of U.S. troops in Somalia this year, putting them at the highest level since the 1993 Black Hawk Down episode that left 18 Americans dead.** There are now more than 500 U.S. troops stationed in the east African country ravaged by civil war, Politico reported, the most since two Black Hawk helicopters were shot down and a pilot captured in Mogadishu more than two decades ago. It is the latest development in Trump’s strategy of expanding military commanders’ authority in the battle against jihadis in Africa. Keep Up With This Story And More By Subscribing Now The U.S. is now transporting more troops to Somalia to advise and train Somali troops in a bid to combat radical Islamists who have long operated in the failed state. Somalia now has a functioning government but its institutions remain weak. As well as ramping up its troop presence in the country, the Pentagon has quietly increased its drone operations in Somalia. **Since the beginning of 2017, the U.S. military has conducted 28 drone strikes against radical Islamists in Somalia. More than half of those—15 strikes—have been conducted since the beginning of September. The U.S. Africa Command conducted a total of 15 strikes in the whole of 2016.**

**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.** RELATED: Trump Triples Drone Strikes on Yemen, Kills More Civilians 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 rule

**Mazzetti**, Mark. “In Somalia, U.S. Escalates a Shadow War.” **The New York Times**, The New York Times, 16 Oct. **2016**, <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/world/africa/obama-somalia-secret-war.html?mtrref=www.google.com>First, some context.

**Over time, the executive branch has stretched the nearly 15-year-old authorization by Congress to justify military actions far from Afghanistan and against foes other than Al Qaeda and the Taliban. It has done so by deeming other groups to be part of or “associated forces” with Al Qaeda, including the Yemen-based Al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula, the Syria-based Nusra Front, and the Islamic State, a former Qaeda affiliate in Iraq that Al Qaeda excommunicated. As the distance has grown between the text of the 2001 authorization and the combat waged in its name, critics have called on Congress to vindicate its constitutional role in decisions about war and peace by modernizing it. But Congress has been too polarized and gridlocked to act, essentially acquiescing to the executive branch’s interpretations of what the authorization covers.** Continue reading the main story RELATED COVERAGE U.S. Strikes in Somalia Kill 150 Shabab Fighters MARCH 7, 2016 Advertisement Continue reading the main story **Such legislative paralysis only reinforces the executive branch’s inclination to stretch the law. President Obama originally made his claim that the authorization permitted him to attack the Islamic State, even though that group is Al Qaeda’s enemy, because he saw Congress as too dysfunctional to hold a timely vote on any new war measure. Against that backdrop, administration officials have long been arguing internally about whether the Shabab, as a group, are a Qaeda “associated force” and therefore part of the authorized war.** The question is ambiguous because even though the Shabab share Qaeda ideology, **many members are just focused on controlling Somalia. But some of them have Qaeda links and want to commit terrorist attacks abroad** — like the Shabab’s attack on a Kenyan shopping mall in 2013. In its public announcements, the Pentagon sometimes characterizes the operations as “self-defense strikes,” though some analysts have said this rationale has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is only because American forces are now being deployed on the front lines in Somalia that they face imminent threats from the Shabab. America’s role in Somalia has expanded as the Shabab have become bolder and more cunning. The group has attacked police headquarters, bombed seaside restaurants, killed Somali generals and stormed heavily fortified bases used by African Union troops. In January, Shabab fighters killed more than 100 Kenyan troops and drove off with their trucks and weapons. The group carried out the 2013 attack at the Westgate mall, which killed more than 60 people and wounded more than 175 in Nairobi, Kenya. More recently it has branched into more sophisticated forms of terrorism, including nearly downing a Somali airliner in February with a bomb hidden in a laptop computer.

**The impact of entering excess conflict through exercising unilateral power is threefold.**

**1) First is increasing terrorism. The Burke of The Guardian quantifies that 71 percent of Somalians point to U.S. government action that prompted to join a terrorist group. This is why Brown of The Hill reports that due to U.S. presence, terrorist groups such as Al-Shabab remain deeply entrenched in Somalia, controlling the government and causing corruption.**

**Burke**, Jason. “African Governments' Actions Push People into Extremism, Study Finds.” **The Guardian**, Guardian News and Media, 7 Sept. **2017**, <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/sep/07/african-governments-actions-push-people-into-extremism-study-finds>

**According to a comprehensive United Nations study published last month, evidence shows that in "a majority of cases, state action appears to be the primary factor finally pushing individuals into violent extremism in Africa." Of more than 500 former members of militant organisations interviewed for the report, the Guardian noted, 71 percent pointed to "government action," including "killing of a family member or friend" or "arrest of a family member or friend" as the incident that prompted them to join a group.** "State security-actor conduct is revealed as a prominent accelerator of recruitment, rather than the reverse," the UN report stated.

contributor, Vanda Felbab-**Brown** opinion. “More Airstrikes, Less Aid Not Enough to Secure Somalia.” **TheHill**, 16 Jan. **2018**, thehill.com/opinion/international/369127-more-airstrikes-less-aid-not-enough-to-secure-somalia.

**Although only numbering between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters, and despite its brutal and unpopular backward version of Islam, al Shabab remains deeply entrenched. Systematically, it outperforms the national government and local powerbrokers in the provision of order and brutal, although not corrupt, justice. Meanwhile, official Somali political processes and public institutions remain in the pockets of powerful clans, which discriminate against their rivals and advance narrow parochial interests. They are also pervaded by corruption and usurpation of public resources for private gain.** Thus, even Mogadishu residents often prefer to approach al Shabab for the resolution of land and other disputes: Its decisions are widely seen as swift and not corrupt. Using al Shabab-controlled roads is predictable and safe at least for those who don’t collaborate with the government. Buses, taxis and trucks are charged a flat fee upon arriving at a Shabab checkpoint and given a receipt. Their cargo is safe.

**2) Second is war spillover. Gettleman of Cornell University writes that U.S. warfare in Somalia is passed on to new areas in the Middle East and North Africa as American troops spread through warzones. Pollack of Foreign Policy contextualizes that as Somalian conflict leads to terrorists fleeing to Mali, the same militant groups radicalize populations and increase the chance of civil wars.**

Mark Mazzetti, Jeffrey **Gettleman** and Eric Schmitt. “In Somalia, U.S. Escalates a Shadow War.” The New York Times, The New York Times, 16 Oct. **2016**, [Jeffrey Gettleman, a winner of the Pulitzer Prize in 2012 for international reporting, is The Times’s South Asia bureau chief, based in New Delhi. His work has appeared in National Geographic, GQ, Foreign Policy and The New York Review of Books. He studied philosophy at **Cornell University** before winning a Marshall Scholarship to study at Oxford. He was previously the East Africa bureau chief, based in Kenya, from 2006 to 2017. He is the author of “Love, Africa,” a memoir about his experiences in Africa and a whole bunch of other things.] <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/10/16/world/africa/obama-somalia-secret-war.html>

The Somalia campaign, as it is described by American and African officials and international monitors of the Somali conflict, is partly designed to avoid repeating that debacle, which led to the deaths of 18 American soldiers**. But it carries enormous risks — including more American casualties, botched airstrikes that kill civilians and the potential for the United States to be drawn even more deeply into a troubled country that so far has stymied all efforts to fix it. The Somalia campaign is a blueprint for warfare that President Obama has embraced and will pass along to his successor. It is a model the United States now employs across the Middle East and North Africa — from Syria to Libya — despite the president’s stated aversion to American “boots on the ground” in the world’s war zones.** This year alone, the United States has carried out airstrikes in seven countries and conducted Special Operations missions in many more. American officials said the White House had quietly broadened the president’s authority for the use of force in Somalia by allowing airstrikes to protect American and African troops as they combat fighters from the Shabab, a Somali-based militant group that has proclaimed allegiance to Al Qaeda. Continue reading the main story Advertisement Continue reading the main story In its public announcements, the Pentagon sometimes characterizes the operations as “self-defense strikes,” though some analysts have said this rationale has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is only because American forces are now being deployed on the front lines in Somalia that they face imminent threats from the Shabab.

Byman, Daniel L., and Kenneth M. **Pollack**. “The Syrian Spillover.” **Foreign Policy**, Foreign Policy, 10 Aug. **2012**, [foreignpolicy.com/2012/08/10/the-syrian-spillover/](http://foreignpolicy.com/2012/08/10/the-syrian-spillover/)

**Today, after years of punishing U.S. drone strikes in Pakistan, al Qaeda’a core is weak, but its offshoots remain strong in countries wracked by internal conflict such as Yemen and Somalia. The most recent flare-up is in Mali, where fighters fleeing Muammar al-Qaddafi’s Libya fled with arms looted from his arsenals, and have seized parts of Mali, in some areas even imposing a draconian form of Islamic law. While there had been intermittent rebellions in Northern Mali for years, the civil war in Libya vastly increased the capability of the rebels and created a worse terrorism problem for the region, andpotentially for the world. These terrorist groups rarely remain confined by the country’s borders. Some will nest among refugee populations, launching attacks back into the country in civil war**, and inviting attack against the refugee populations hosting them. In other cases, terrorists may decide that neighboring regimes or a segment of a neighboring society are aiding their adversaries and attack them to try to scare them into stopping their assistance.

One of the most ineffable but also one of the most potent manifestations of spillover is the tendency for a civil war in one country to galvanize and radicalize neighboring populations. **They regularly radicalize neighboring populations when a group in a neighboring state identifies with a related group caught up in the civil war across the border. These tribal, ethnic, and sectarian feelings always predate the conflict, but the outbreak of war among the same groups just across the border makes them tangible and immediate — giving them a reason to hate neighbors and resent their own government.** They may demand that their government or community leaders act to support one side or another. Alternatively, they may agitate for harsh actions in their own countries against groups they see as sympathizing with the enemy side over the border**. Thus, the Iraqi civil war of 2005-2007 galvanized Sunnis in Egypt, Jordan, the Maghreb, and the Persian Gulf states both to demand that their own governments do more to support the Iraqi Sunni groups and (at least in the Gulf) to demand harsher treatment of their own Shiite populations. At its most dangerous, this aspect of spillover can contribute to civil wars next door.** The Lebanese civil war that began in 1975 prompted the Syrian Sunnis to launch their own civil war against Bashar al-Assad’s father in 1976, a conflict that only ended with the horrific massacre of 20,000-40,000 people at Hama in 1982.

**3) Third is killing civilians, who die as result of U.S. intervention in two ways. One is botched strikes, as Graham of AU News reports that botched American drone strikes have led to revenge attacks in Somalia, such as bombings, resulting in a total of 300 deaths so far. Two is Special Operations massacres, as Turse of Democracy Now explains that due to false intelligence, U.S.**

**Graham**, Ben. “Could the Somalia Bombing Been a Revenge Strike?” **NewsComAu**, 18 Oct. **2017**, www.news.com.au/world/africa/botched-usled-strike-could-have-inspired-revenge-attack-in-somalia/news-story/912b8e90dbde614a9b2adbefe3c6197a

**THE TERRORIST behind the weekend’s sickening truck bomb attack killing over 300 people could have been motivated by revenge after a botched US-led strike. Somalia is still reeling from the blast, which was one of the world’s deadliest attacks in years and the worst the country has ever seen.** Now, investigators in the war-torn African country believe the attack on Saturday may have been a revenge attack by the bomber — after his home town was raided by local troops and US special forces two months ago.

**In addition to the 30-plus airstrikes in 2017, there were at least three U.S. ground attacks. In one of the latter, described by AFRICOM as “an advise-and-assist operation alongside members of the Somali National Army,” Navy SEAL Kyle Milliken was killed and two U.S. personnel were injured during a firefight with al-Shabaab militants. In another ground operation in August, according to an investigation by the Daily Beast, Special Operations forces took part in a massacre of 10 Somali civilians.** (The U.S. military is now investigating.) As in Afghanistan, the U.S. has been militarily engaged in Somalia since 2001 and, as in Afghanistan, despite more than a decade and a half of operations, the number of militant groups being targeted has only increased. U.S. commandos are now battling at least two terror groups -- al-Shabaab and a local Islamic State affiliate -- as drone strikes spiked in the last year and Somalia became an ever-hotter war zone. Today, according to AFRICOM, militants operate “training camps” and possess “safe havens throughout Somalia [and] the region.”

**However, the violence can still be solved. The Office of The Historian writes that Congressional Oversight over the president helps to make better policy decisions and better decision making calculus as they promote cross branch information exchange and limit excess authorization.**

Hearings are most commonly held for three reasons: to consider pending legislation; to investigate issues that may require legislation in the future; and, to investigate and oversee federal programs. They reflect the most important issues of the day and what occupies congressional attention. **This means that Congress holds hearings on a variety of issues**, from steroid abuse in professional sports to the use of weather satellites. Hearings have also been used to further the rights of minority groups. **Congressional investigations not only help legislators make better policy decisions, but they are central to the system of checks and balances. Investigatory hearings can uncover presidential abuses of power and corruption, such as the Teapot Dome scandal in the 1920s or Watergate in the 1970s.** But hearings have also been used for less noble purposes, such as the blacklisting of private citizens during the “un-American activities” hearings in the 1950s. While the power to investigate is broad, the Supreme Court has since ruled that Congress must confine itself to “legislative purposes” and avoid the strictly private affairs of individual citizens**.**

In recent years, Congress has allowed its oversight muscles to atrophy. **As the Democracy Fund’s Governance Program notes, regular oversight by congressional committees has traditionally played a crucial, constructive role in program management, cross-branch information exchange, and, important for many conservatives, in limiting the size and scope of government as part of the regular review and reauthorization of federal legislation and programs.** As that capacity has diminished and hyper-partisanship has increased, regular oversight has been replaced by more antagonistic — and ultimately less productive — committee activity, undermining the effectiveness of the Congress as a whole.