

REPORT ON THE LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE UNITED STATES'  
USE OF MILITARY FORCE AND RELATED NATIONAL SECURITY OPERATIONS

This report is provided in accordance with 50 U.S.C. § 1549(a). It constitutes the calendar-year 2025 report on changes to the legal and policy frameworks for the United States' use of military force and related national security operations.

On January 30, 2025, President Trump rescinded President Biden's October 2022 Presidential Policy Memorandum, replacing it with the Principles, Standards, and Procedures for U.S. Direct Action Against Terrorist Targets (PSP) from President Trump's first term. Since the reinstatement of the PSP, it has been the policy framework for U.S. direct action.

In 2025, pursuant to the 2001 Authorization for Use of Military Force (2001 AUMF), U.S. Armed Forces conducted safe and humane detention operations at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Pursuant to the President's Article II authority, the U.S. Armed Forces assisted in the defense of Israel and used force in the following countries and regions: Iran, Iraq, Nigeria, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, the Caribbean Sea, and the Eastern Pacific Ocean.

## **2001 AUMF**

The Scope of the 2001 AUMF: No change.

Foreign Forces, Irregular Forces, Groups, or Individuals for Which a Determination Has Been Made That Force Could Legally Be Used Under the 2001 AUMF: No change.

Criteria for Designating a Foreign Force, Irregular Force, Group, or Individual as Lawfully Targetable, as a High-Value Target, and as Formally or Functionally a Member of a Group Covered Under the 2001 AUMF: No change.

## **Application of Key Domestic and International Legal Principles to Key Theaters**

Iraq and Syria: Section 8370 of the Fiscal Year 2026 National Defense Authorization Act, signed into law by President Trump on December 18, 2025, repealed the 2002 AUMF Against Iraq (Pub. L. No. 107-243, 116 Stat. 1498). U.S. Forces continued operating in Iraq and Syria against ISIS and al-Qa'ida pursuant to the 2001 AUMF.

Yemen: In response to attacks and threats by Houthi militants on U.S. military forces operating lawfully in the Red Sea and surrounding waters, U.S. Forces conducted strikes in self-defense against Houthi weapons and infrastructure in Yemen. President Trump directed these actions consistent with his responsibility to protect lawfully deployed U.S. Forces and in furtherance of the United States' national security and foreign policy interests, pursuant to his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive and to conduct foreign relations. The United States took these necessary and proportionate actions consistent with international law and the exercise of the inherent right of self-defense as reflected in Article 51 of the U.N. Charter.

Israel: The United States assisted Israel in shooting down ballistic missiles and unmanned aircraft launched by Iran in its attacks against Israel in June 2025. These actions were purely defensive in nature and in support of Israel's exercise of its inherent right of self-defense. At the close of 2025, U.S. Forces remained postured in the region to serve important U.S. national interests, including the protection of U.S. persons and property from attacks by Iran and Iranian-aligned militias, and to continue supporting the defense of Israel, to which our commitment remains ironclad.

Somalia: No change.

Iran: The United States exercised the inherent right of collective self-defense and advanced vital U.S. interests by conducting precision airstrikes on three nuclear facilities in Iran: Fordow, Natanz, and Isfahan. The United States took these necessary and proportionate actions to defend Israel and to protect its own security, citizens, and interests, consistent with Article 51 of the U.N. Charter. The President directed this action pursuant to his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive and pursuant to his constitutional authority to conduct foreign relations.

Nigeria: Pursuant to the 2001 AUMF, on December 25, 2025, the United States conducted strikes targeting two ISIS locations in Sarma Valley, Sokoto State, Nigeria. The Government of Nigeria consented to this operation. The objective of the operation was to degrade ISIS capability, protect Nigerian civilians, and defend American lives at home and abroad.

Caribbean Sea and Eastern Pacific Ocean: Since September 2025, the United States military has conducted precision strikes

against violent drug trafficking organizations that have been designated as terrorist organizations. These terrorist organizations have poisoned countless American lives, and their operations threaten U.S. national security and foreign policy interests both at home and abroad. President Trump ordered these strikes pursuant to his constitutional authority as Commander in Chief and Chief Executive and to conduct foreign relations. The strikes have been conducted consistent with the United States' inherent right of self-defense.