

By Nick Mottern

Here are recent news items that reminded me of why we keep working to ban weaponized drones regardless of how far away that goal may seem.

Ethiopia

"The Ethiopian military's increasing use of drones to conduct airstrikes over the last year has changed the conflict landscape. In theory, drones should allow for more precise targeting of military objectives; however, our investigation indicates that their use has exposed civilians to new and heightened risks. Our findings are especially concerning given reports of airstrikes in Tigray since August, which have killed and injured civilians, including children."

[Steven Ratner, noted U.S. human rights attorney and member of the U.N. commission investigating war crimes in the Ethiopian civil war, commenting](#) on the group's report on September 19, 2022. *Turkey is supplying Turkish-made TB2 killer drones to the Ethiopian government, just as Turkey has done in Libya and Ukraine.*

Somalia

1. Somalia drought: Are US terror laws hampering aid effort? As nearly 8 million people face extreme hunger in Somalia amid a devastating famine, major humanitarian organizations are warning that they can't deliver food, water, or cash to those in need because of restrictions imposed by American counterterrorism legislation. *[BBC News/ Phelan Chatterjee]*

2. US launches another airstrike targeting al-Shabaab in Somalia. In the latest part of an escalation in US military actions in Somalia, the US launched another airstrike this week targeting members of al-Shabaab. AFRICOM claimed the strike killed 27 al-Shabaab militants

and that no civilians were harmed.

Like all of the other recent US strikes in Somalia, the Pentagon cited collective self defense of partner Somali forces as the legal justification. But the Somali government described the strike as part of "offensive operations" against al-Shabaab. *[Twitter/ Brian Finucane] [Twitter/ SNTV News] [Reuters] [FDD's Long War Journal/ Bill Roggio and Caleb Weiss] [Africom]*

[Both items from ReThink Round-up](#) . This news summary is definitely worth subscribing to.

Afghanistan

"The U.S. is negotiating with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to trade nearly 50 military aircraft flown across the border as the Afghan government collapsed last summer for help hunting terrorists in Afghanistan, according to two people with knowledge of the talks."

Quote from [this Politico article](#) indicating that the U.S. hopes that an arms deal with Uzbekistan and Tajikistan will solve its problem of not having killer drone bases in any countries surrounding Afghanistan.

Here are Human Rights Watch reports for 2022 on [Uzbekistan](#) and [Tajikistan](#).

CIA Proud of Illegal Killing of al-Zawahiri

[Perhaps with an eye to the November midterms.](#) President Biden, or someone, apparently thinks it is a good idea to attract more publicity to the CIA killing of Ayman al-Zawahiri. Apparently, there is less concern with secrecy about this execution than other exhibits in the CIA museum, if it puts a bloody feather in Biden's cap.

Perhaps [the architectural model is intended to show the public how careful Biden was](#) in ordering an illegal execution
. Weaponized drones make it so much easier for leaders to kill for the pack.

A tip of the hat to Mike Allen for putting news of the CIA model in his Axios AM newsletter of Sept. 25, 2022.