# REMOTE WARFARE (RW): DEVELOPING A FRAMEWORK FOR EVALUATING ITS USE
## DR JON MORAN
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REMOTE CONTROL

Examining changes in military engagement

The Remote Control project is a project of the **Network for Social Change** hosted by **Oxford Research Group**.  The project examines changes in military engagement, in particular the use of drones, special forces, private military companies and cyber warfare.

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Cover image: Soldiers from the 1st Battalion the Royal Welsh Regiment at the start of Operation Moshtarak in Helmand, Afghanistan.  Operation Moshtarak was an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) pacification offensive in the town of Marjah, Helmand Province, Afghanistan. It involved 15,000 American, Afghan, Canadian, Estonian, Danish and British troops . Source: UK Ministry of Defence on flickr.

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"The campaign in Libya showed it was right to keep balanced armed forces, right to retain a significant RAF fast-jet capability, right to focus on building practical co-operation with the UAE and Qatar, and right to be buying more drones, tanker aircraft, helicopters and intelligence gathering capability."
Prime Minister, Written Ministerial Statements — Prime Minister: Strategic Defence and Security Review (First Annual Report) 7 December 2011.

"In short, handing war to the special operators severs an already too tenuous link between war and politics; it becomes war for its own sake."
Andrew Bacevich quoted in Nick Turse 'Secret wars and Black ops Blowback' TomDispatch, January 16 2014 http://bit.ly/1wJslhV

"It's very tempting for any country to have a clean, antiseptic approach, that you can use technology, but it's not something that I think is going to be an effective strategy, unless it is part of a wider commitment."
Gen (Retired) Stanley McChrystal quoted in Peter Foster 'US general says Britain risks 'special relationship' if it cuts military', Daily Telegraph January 17 2013.

"At the moment Britain cannot claim to have a coherent [defence and security] policy – but we need one sooner rather than later."
Email communication to the author from Sir Bob Russell MP 15 September 2014.

# Contents

# Executive Summary

## Remote Warfare (RW): developing a framework for evaluating its use

- RW is not a type of new warfare. It has a longer history than the focus on technology (drones) might lead us to believe. RW can be traced back to the British Empire and US military activities in the 1920s. It can be situated within existing military theory

- It concentrates force application with specialist resources but its impact is limited militarily and politically

- RW is a tactical innovation not a strategic one. In strategic jargon it is 'capabilities-based' rather than 'purpose (strategy) based'

- RW in the UK is far less fitted into a wider strategy than its use by the USA, France or Israel.

- RW is a response to 'losing control' gradually of the USA's strategic position in the Middle East after the 'war on terror.' This applies to the UK also.

- RW is useful in shoring up a regime and dealing with emergency situation (rapid incursions) stabilising regimes (Sierra Leone) and protecting civilians (Libya allegedly in 2011, Mali in 2013, northern Iraq in 2014). RW is effective in undermining existing regimes (Libya 2011)

- RW is risky and in some cases irresponsible because it can lead to disorder and blowback

- RW needs to be fitted into a prior strategy and after-deployment support to be effective – but this tends to mitigate against the reasons for its use in the first place

- RW is less accountable than conventional warfare – it doesn't require debates in parliament, it can be increased via existing training and mentoring relationships, and intelligence relationships; SF activity is Neither Confirm Nor Deny (NCND) by the government, and the mentoring or support of local militias makes accountability even more tenuous

- RW causes fewer casualties than conventional warfare e.g. Somalia in 1993. However RW still involves substantial face to face killing and RW still raises ethical HR concerns particularly when it is part of an ongoing campaign with no alternative suggested and which sees civilian casualties mount

- RW is by its nature less open to public scrutiny

- RWs relationship to international law is often unclear

- RW is likely to be used by the UK government as a result of its fiscal crisis, downsizing of its armed forces, disorganisation in procurement and public fatigue with the 'war on terror.' It will only be effective when part of a coherent defence policy (and even then has risks)

- RW can be evaluated according to criteria which could in theory be allocated 'points: 1 Strategy - did it achieve its aims? 2 Proportionality: what were the Rules of Engagement and Civilian casualties? How did they relate to aims of RW and the resistance to these? 3 Cost? 4 Did it have domestic sanction? 5 Did it have international sanction? 6 What were the long term effects?

# Introduction

'enemy forces will be located, tracked and targeted almost instantaneously through the use of data links, computer assisted intelligence evaluation, and automatic fire control. With first round kill probabilities approaching certainty, and with surveillance devices that can continually track the enemy, the need for large forces to fix the opposition physically will be less important.'

This quote, seemingly fitted perfectly to the year 2014 actually dates from 1969 and was the view of the former US military commander in Vietnam, General William Westmoreland.[1] It reflects the long history of the idea that new technologies will allow advanced military forces to defeat the enemy without having to engage them directly on the ground – the essence of Remote Warfare (RW). The United States suffered a defeat in Vietnam however and questions remain today about remote warfare as a solution to problems of conflict. This paper examines the origins of remote warfare (RW) and looks at why remote warfare has become a major part of the intervention, counter insurgency and counter terrorism policies of Western states such as the USA, UK and France in the last decade. It discusses the effectiveness of remote warfare and last but not least, its ethics.

It will be argued here that Remote Warfare is not a strategy it is a tactic which has become an end in itself. Its aim however fits in to a strategic concept - the idea that Western states are to an extent 'losing control' of international affairs and either do not possess - or will not deploy - the proper tools to respond to this. While Rogers argues that the appropriate tools to bring stability to international affairs might be political, the US has moved to create new coercive tools[2] and RW is a part of this.[3]

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1    General William Westmoreland, chief of US Military Assistance Command Vietnam 1964-68 quoted in Philip Griffiths Vietnam Inc. (London Phaidon 2011), p194.

2    P. Rogers Losing Control (3rd edn London: Pluto Press 2010) pp8-9 and chapter six. See chapter five for alternate ways of reducing global conflict.

3    I have not gone into detail where other areas are covered by RW briefing papers. I have also alluded to these papers where appropriate. For drone strikes readers should consult Wali Aslam 'Terrorist Relocation and the Societal Consequences of US drones strikes in Pakistan', Remote Control Project Briefing Paper (London Remote Control Project 2014). Finally the stress on this report is on the UK since there has been already been much focus on US SOCOM and its actions. See J. Scahill, Dirty Wars (London Serpent's Tail 2014)

# Defining Remote Warfare

## A Brief History of Remote Warfare

In developing a definition it might be easier to examine RW by placing it in political and security context. To begin, Remote Warfare has always had a connection with empire and it is as a tactic for stabilising certain empires that it first appears. To appreciate this tactic it is first necessary to examine empires that did not use Remote Warfare. Remote warfare played little or no role in two of the major empires of the twentieth century. The empire established by the Nazis ruled its territories directly through German occupation authorities either the Wermacht (France and Belgium) or the SS (Poland and Bohemia-Moravia) backed up by large standing troop deployments and tightly controlled local collaborators. Little if any leeway was given to local political authority in German national socialist vision and practice, and Adolf Hitler remained astonished at how the British had ruled India with so few personnel.[4] Remote warfare only appeared as a late tactical adjunct to the German war campaign in the form of V-1 and V-2 weapons. Similarly the Japanese Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere promised north and southeast Asian countries liberation from British, French and Dutch rule but in practice the Japanese Imperial authorities controlled their empire with large occupation forces and collaborators who had little real authority.[5] Following World War 2 this pattern would be repeated by the USSR. Massive numbers of Soviet troops stationed in Poland, Hungary and East Germany plus a substantial KGB presence cemented an authoritarian control system centred on the USSR and maintained by direct ground interventions by troops - in 1953 in East Germany in Hungary in 1956 and in Czechoslovakia in 1968.[6]

We have to look to the empires created by Britain and the United States of America to see the first connection between empire and Remote Warfare. The British largely ran their empire through local political authorities and military auxiliaries, deploying troops and warships and air power only when necessary. As Gott points out:

'while many indigenous peoples joined rebellions, others took the imperial shilling. In most of their colonies, the British encountered resistance, but they often had local allies who, for reasons of class or money, or simply with an eye to the main chance, supported the conquering legions. Without these fifth columns the imperial project would never have been possible.'

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4    M. Mazower Hitler's Empire. How the Nazis Ruled Europe (New York Penguin 2008).

5    E. Drea, Japan's Imperial Army. Its Rise and Fall 1853-1945 (Kansas: University Press 2009), chapter 11.

6    A. Applebaum, Iron Curtain: The Crushing of Eastern Europe, 1944-1956 (London Allen Lane 2012)

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Further,

> 'The use of indigenous peoples to fight imperial wars was a significant development in these early years and became a central element in the future strategy of Europe's empires'[7]

This model was perhaps encapsulated by the Indian Army. Even after the famous mutinies of troops in 1857 the Indian army still stood at twice the size of British troops in India (125,000 to 62,000)[8] and became absolutely essential to the security of Britain's position, with Indian troops (or ex troops) serving in territories across the British imperium, and fighting in both World Wars.

New technologies didn't change the tactic of 'remote control,' they just added to it. For example the development of an air force allowed 'counter insurgency by bombing.' The development of British airpower saw it employed against resistance movements in the Indian Northwest Frontier, Somaliland and Sudan and it was seen as cheap and effective. For example in 1920 following a series of anti-British revolts in Iraq 'a government strapped of cash and short of soldiers found itself dragged into war.' As a result 'recently discharged Sikh soldiers were tempted back by 100 rupee bonuses.' These and other local forces defeated the revolts. Afterwards order was then maintained through bombing when required throughout the 1920s to 1932.[9]

This might then be an early case of remote control – British metropolitan authority, the use of auxiliaries (private where necessary) and the use of distant weapons via the latest technology. We might add to this the importance of intelligence. As Walton points out 'One reason for the importance of intelligence in the Empire was the lack of sheer manpower required to cover such enormous territories.'[10]  Although British colonial intelligence was patchy in effectiveness in certain areas and at certain times[11] overall it performed effectively in repressing threats if not predicting them, with intelligence used to manoeuvre the limited numbers of British troops or the local auxiliaries as seen in the Northwest Frontier, Egypt, South Africa and

elsewhere.[12]

The USA also developed remote warfare in the early 20th century as it expanded its power abroad. Lacking the massive land armies of European continental states, the US used what would now be termed special forces in their imperial expansion and control. The United States Marine Corps (USMC) subdued the Philippines in a bloody campaign[13] and closer to home established US strategic dominance of Central America. In the first three decades of the 20th century,

> 'US troops invaded Caribbean countries at least thirty-four times, occupied Honduras, Mexico, Guatemala and Costa Rica for short periods, and remained in Haiti, Cuba, Nicaragua, Panama and the Dominican Republic for longer stays.'[14]

Such expeditions not only led to institutional developments like the US Joint Chiefs of Staff but in Nicaragua in the 1920s the US developed,

> 'tactics that would become standard elements in twentieth century air warfare [including] reconnaissance flights, ground to air communication signalling, use of aircraft to evacuate wounded…and long distance aerial troop rotations and supply missions.'[15]

After 1945 and the institutionalisation of the Cold War remote warfare became a tool of US and UK policy around the globe but it was limited. The British were again amongst the first to attempt covert RW when, supported by the Foreign Office, MI6 and former officers of the Special Operations Executive (the UK's clandestine warfare arm) established a base in Malta which trained nearly 30 Albanian dissidents to covertly enter Albania and see if they could establish resistance and gain intelligence. Split into six groups all either retreated or were caught by security forces, with only one group lasting 2 months. Insertion operations continued into 1950. A parallel public group was established, the Committee for a Free Albania.[16]  These and similar operations had little chance considering the effectiveness of communist security police, the insurgents' lack of knowledge of local politics and the lack of legitimacy of the operators (many of whom were ex-Nazis) compared to the support of communism prevailing at the time. The next major attempt at RW was the Bay of Pigs invasion in 1961 aimed at

7       R. Gott, Britain's Empire. Resistance, Repression and Revolt (London Verso 2011) both quotes page 6. See also G. Bryant 'Indigenous Mercenaries in the Service of European Imperialists: The Case of the Sepoys in the Early British Indian Army 1970-1800' War in History Vol 7 No 1 2000 pp2-28.

8       A. Mallinson, The Making of the British Army. From the Civil War to the War on Terror (London Bantam 2009) p215.

9       L. James, The Rise and Fall of the British Empire (London Abacus 2012) pp.399-402.

10      C. Walton, Empire of Secrets. British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire (London Harper 2013), p.2.

11      M. Thomas, Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder After 1914 (Berkeley University of California Press 2007).

12      Walton, Empire of Secrets.pp2-4; see also Mallinson, The Making of the British Army, pp239-256.

13      M. Fellman, In The Name of God and Country. Reconsidering Terrorism in American History (Yale: New Haven 2010) chapter six.

14      G. Grandin, Empire's Workshop. Latin America, the United States and the Rise of the New Imperialism (New York: Henry Holt 2010), p.20

15      Grandin, pp20-22.

16      See S. Dorril, MI6. A History of Special Operations (London Fourth Estate 2000) pp382-395; K. Jeffery, The Secret History of MI6 (London Penguin 2011) pp712-16. The Albania operation was betrayed by senior MI6 officer Kim Philby but was unlikely to have been successful.

toppling Castro's new socialist regime. A plan approved by President Eisenhower saw mobilisation camps established in Guatemala in 1960 which trained 1400 Cuban exiles who, supported by US airpower, invaded Cuba in 1961.[17] The failure of this left remote warfare in abeyance until in remerged as part of President Ronald Reagan's 'second cold war' in Central America in the 1980s which saw operations in El Salvador in support of the government against the left wing guerrillas and in Nicaragua against the leftist elected government there. But we can say that by the 1960s the principles of RW had been established:

> 1. The use of flexible expeditionary/policing forces rather than garrisons operating from networks of 'lillypad' bases
>
> 2. The use of local auxiliary forces who have knowledge and less accountability
>
> 3. The use of 'killing at a distance' techniques based on new technology
>
> 4. The use of elite special units (both public and private) as force multipliers (This may include covert action)
>
> 5. The increasing emphasis on intelligence/surveillance to enable force concentration
>
> 6. Information operations

These operations may be used on their own, in which case they are 'pure' Remote Warfare, or they may be used in addition to proxy war (the support and use of another state's conventional forces)[18] or as a tactical addition to conventional war. It is therefore, one tool of control by globally or regionally dominant powers.

In the contemporary context RW has emerged as part of a trend of 'post heroic warfare' or 'risk transfer militarism.'[19] Sensitivity to military casualties in Western states has led to an increasing reliance on airpower and then local auxiliaries. This trend was interrupted with the invasion of Iraq and the large scale deployments in Afghanistan but the failure of these interventions has led to a resurgence of Remote Warfare with the advance of new technology in the form of drones and surveillance and better equipped special forces (this

is discussed in more detail in the section on the UK below).

## Remote warfare and military theory

Remote Warfare is not a new type of war. According to the description above it has been practised since the early part of this century. A concentration on technology (such as drones) may lead away from understanding the 'deep' nature of RW. In fact RW conforms to some of Clausewitz's classic basic thinking on war:

> 'The best strategy is always to be very strong, first generally then at the decisive point. Therefore, apart from the energy which creates the army, a work which is not always done by the general there is no more imperative and no simpler law for strategy than to keep the forces concentrated.'[20]

Clausewitz focused on the problem of keeping forces concentrated in time and space[21] and RW is a tool for firstly keeping armed forces concentrated and secondly maintaining control. RW avoids the splitting up of forces while the Revolution in Military Affairs (the development of technology which allows the accurate delivery of greater and greater firepower) allows their concentration, solving some of Clausewitz's problems. RW can also maintain a constant level of force which Clausewitz could not have dreamed of, since in his time muskets and artillery could neither be fired quickly or continuously without breaking down.

However to repeat, we must be careful of looking at RW as something new. To be sure, drones to an extent escape the rules of ground warfare but they are not the first innovation to promise a type of killing at a distance which will revolutionise warfare: artillery, the machine gun and airpower promised the same but did not fundamentally change the nature of conflict.[22] Further, special forces and auxiliaries on the ground still have to obey Clausewitz's dictums about the need for concentration and the nature of war. Certainly 'special operations capability constitutes a permanent option in the locker of statecraft and strategy'[23] and SF can function as guerrillas to cause maximum effect beyond their size. But unlike guerrillas they have no local popular support so their operations are high risk. A similar problem is evident with Private Military Companies (PMCs). Combat effect can be multiplied where they can lead or train local auxiliaries but again strategic effect will be limited.

Mention of Clausewitz is important for it raises the issue the purpose of RW. The UK case studies in this report show that RW is what Gentile calls 'a strategy

17        'The Bay of Pigs' http://www.jfklibrary.org/JFK/JFK-in-History/The-Bay-of-Pigs.aspx
18        See for example US support for Ethiopian forces in Somalia, where a previous RW operation had failed to prevent the Union of Islamic Courts coming to power in 2006 and the US had to move towards proxy war using 10,000 Ethiopian troops. See Matthew Aid, Intel Wars (New York: Bloomsbury 2012) pp132-42.
19        As Luttwak argues 'to lose a few hundred soldiers in some minor venture or even some thousands in a small war or expeditionary campaign were routine events for the Great Powers of history' E. Luttwak Strategy (Cambridge Belknap 2001) p69 and see pp68-76; M. Shaw 'Risk Transfer Militarism' November 13 2001 http://martinshaw.org/2009/12/13/risk-transfer-militarism-the-new-western-way-of-war-13-nov-2001/

20        C. von Clausewitz, On War (Hertfordshire Wordsworth 1997), p175.
21        von Clausewitz, On War, p175-86.
22        See for example J. Ellis, A Social History of the Machine Gun (London: The Cresset Library 1987).
23        C. Gray, Modern Strategy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p290.

of tactics'[24] - a collection of tactical innovations which is in danger of becoming an end in itself. This links in with the idea in the USA of the Pentagon's 'Long War' approach/strategy: 'the more or less permanent, global use of pre-emptive raids and armed drones against purported adversaries.'[25]

Having made this point RW cannot be conducted without some kind of conventional backup. In the British Empire the use of local regular forces and auxiliaries rested on a platform of British naval capacity based on a string of ports and coaling stations around the globe. Similarly in the current context British remote warfare and soft power (intelligence, cultural/historical links, engagement) cannot stand on its own. As one defence specialist puts it, 'You do need hard power..if an aircraft carrier is off the coast..it makes your engagement more credible.' Therefore with hard power 'you can then intelligently exercise soft power.'[26]  Similarly, in the current context of its conflict with militarised jihadists in Africa and the Middle East US armed forces remain the guarantor; as French forces are in the case of the failure of remote warfare in Africa.

# How is UK Remote Warfare carried out? Five Case Studies

## Sierra Leone: 'unconscious' remote warfare

A civil war in Sierra Leone had caused some 50,000 casualties during the 1990s. Following a peace agreement UN forces were deployed (UNAMSIL) but the ceasefire appeared to be under threat by the actions of the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) supposedly a signatory to the agreement. The UN asked the USA, UK and France if they would send peacekeepers to strengthen security. The UK government initially offered only technical assistance but then deployed paratroopers to assist in the evacuation of British citizens. These were then supported by Royal Marine commandos.[27]  Under pressure to withdraw the commander on the ground David Richards used the troops at his disposal to support the President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah and his forces and finally end the civil war, by preparing to meet the RUF assault on Freetown, engaging in a fire fight with elements of the RUF and providing support and training to the government after he had already made it clear to the RUF that his force was prepared to take

casualties.[28]  British trainers mentored Sierra Leone Special Forces and assisted in capture of RUF leader Foday Sankoh. Subsequently British Military Training Teams were deployed but a detachment of one of these forces, the Royal Irish Regiment was kidnapped and held by another rebel militia, the West Side Boys. The British launched a rescue and operation by Parachute Regiment and the SAS; the captives were rescued and then the area was cleared and WSB equipment destroyed.[29]  Operation Barras weakened the WSB who'd lost 25 personnel and the subsequent Operation Salone launched by the Sierra Leone Army further pushed back and weakened the militia. The rescue was a catalyst for more support for more assertiveness by the Sierra Leonean government and more international resources for resources for UNAMSIL, allowing a sufficient number of peacekeeping troops to be deployed to stabilise the peace and prevent militias or discontented former army factions from reforming.[30]  In this sense the British involvement with Sierra Leone was 'unconscious' RW: there was no plan for such a deployment – indeed the commander on the ground David Richards and then the kidnap of the British troops provided two catalysts for an intervention which employed small military units, the SAS, useful intelligence and Royal Navy air support. However Sierra Leone, like Kosovo provided a template for future intervention. The interventions although they expanded on the ground, took place within a series of Security Council resolutions which covered the more assertive British operations.[31]

## Afghanistan 2001-02: early remote warfare

Following the 9/11 attacks and with international support the US launched Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and invaded Afghanistan to topple the Taliban regime. The US sought to work with local paramilitaries as they had done in the past. Prime amongst these were the anti-Taliban warlords and their armed forces known as the 'Northern Alliance'. However after the assassination of the leading northern warlord Ahmed Shah Massoud by Al Qaeda supporters in 2001 it was assumed that the Northern Alliance (NA) would disintegrate and be of little use to the US.[32] Nevertheless the disbursement of large amounts of dollars to local paramilitaries, coupled with the support given them by small numbers of CIA, special forces and psyops personnel and US air assets allowed the NA to defeat the Taliban in their power base, the south of the country. Air power bolstered the Uzbek guerrillas under

24      G. Gentile 'A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army' Parameters Autumn (2009) pp.5-17.
25      S. Graham, Cities Under Siege. The New Urban Militarism (London Verso 2011) p251.
26      Gisela Stuart MP, member of the Defence Committee, UK Parliament, interview by Jon Moran 6 Oct 2014.
27      R. Connaughton, 'The mechanics and nature of British interventions into Sierra Leone (2000) and Afghanistan (2001-02)', Civil Wars 5, '2, 2002 pp84-85.

28      BBC 'The brigadier who saved Sierra Leone' From Our Own Correspondent May 15 2010 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/8682505.stm
29      W. Fowler, Operation Barras (London: Cassell 2004) chapter eight.
30      Fowler, Operation Barras, chapter nine.
31      See for example UNSC Resolution 1289 (2000); UNSC Resolution 1334 (2000).
32      M. Scheuer, Imperial Hubris (Virginia: Brassey's 2004), ch. 2

Abdul Rashid Dostum and Mazar e Sharif was taken followed by Kabul and a series of other towns. By this time the CIA and other actors had settled on promoting Hamid Karzai as an acceptable ruler for the new state. With only a small band of around 150 supporters but backed by US military assets Hamid Karzai based himself in Tarin Kowt in Uruzgan Province. After US air power destroyed a Taliban convoy headed towards him, Karzai assembled an army largely of Pashtuns which numbered around 800 and took Kandahar as the Taliban retreated in disarray or surrendered. During a UN organised conference at Bonn, Germany, the disparate militias of the Northern Alliance agreed to Karzai becoming the interim president of Afghanistan with elections expected later. The Bonn Agreement also created the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) which would work in partnership with Afghan organisations and be responsible for security in Kabul, the site of the transitional government.[33]

After the fall of Kabul AQ retreated to Jalalabad and 'coalition signals and human intelligence suggested that significant numbers of Al Qaeda fighters and possible high-value targets were moving from Jalalabad to take refuge in Tora Bora.'[34] US Special Forces, CIA and the UK Special Boat Service assisted eastern warlords in assaulting Tora Bora and calling in substantial air strikes. After a truce was arranged by one of the warlords the AQ fighters escaped overnight across the border to Pakistan.[35] This deployment had been effective enough for regime change but too small to be able to prevent the escape of Bin Laden, a pattern that would be used in Libya in 2011. The SAS and SBS had played a limited role in the campaign of the NA and its US supporters and political pressure from Tony Blair led to units being given a direct mission, the destruction of an AQ defended opium processing plant on the border with Pakistan.[36] Elsewhere a small SBS team with hastily rounded up US SF operators was despatched to assist after AQ and Taliban prisoners attempted to break out of the Northern Alliance prison at Qala-i-Janghi. Using machine guns and air support the UK and US operators quelled the rebellion over a week.[37] The SBS also played a role in continuing to support US SF Task Forces such as Sword.[38] Special Forces also protected the MI6 officers deployed to Afghanistan in the wake of 9/11 'to support the US military led and covert action.' Very quickly MI6 officers were interviewing prisoners rounded up by the Northern Alliance and also US held detainees. But seemingly due to human rights concerns they stopped interviewing detainees in mid-2002.[39]

As to legality the operation was formalised by reference to Article 51 of the UN Charter, and NATO's Charter but as a House of Commons Briefing Paper pointed out:

> The military campaign in Afghanistan was not specifically mandated by the UN, but was widely (although not universally) perceived to be a legitimate form of self-defence under the UN Charter.

UNSC Resolution 1386 did provide legality for the subsequent military stabilisation of the country under ISAF.[40] This campaign had international support and support from the British population with approximately 70% of those asked supporting the intervention and the involvement of British troops in it.[41] During General Tommy Franks period in command September to December 2001 there were 133 allied attacks causing 3127 civilian casualties.[42] During this period approximately 18,000 bombs had been dropped, 10,000 of these guided munitions.[43]

## Libya: intelligence, air power and special forces

The Libyan opposition revolution started in February 2011. UK intervention began in a limited way with an RAF Hercules and 24 marines from the SBS deployed to take 120 foreign oil workers from Zilla to Valetta in Malta. Subsequently the UK Government decided to back the National Transition Council, the main body of the political opposition. Special forces 'E Squadron' combining SAS and SBS troops (and which works closely with MI6) went to Benghazi to talk to the opposition. But the team was detained by 'rebels' - in fact local farmers. SF were then 'closed out of the picture for months.' Air and sea power were deployed in the meantime and by April 2011 a small unit of British military officers and intelligence personnel were despatched and 'were actively working in Benghazi to build capacity - an embryo defence ministry and a command structure. They operated in Benghazi, Misrata and near Brega but they were unarmed and their main role was to get Libyan units working to some sort of plan' and to prevent a NATO strike. But the personnel there argued poor performance by the locals

of Detainees by UK Intelligence Personnel in Afghanistan, Guantanamo Bay and Iraq (London: TSO 2005) pp11-15
40      Quote from I. Sinclair 'Legal or Illegal? The 2001 US-British Attack on Afghanistan. Never Got the U.N. "Green Light" ' Global Research April 8 2014 http://www.globalresearch.ca/legal-or-illegal-the-2001-us-british-attack-on-afghanistan-never-got-the-u-n-green-light/5377115 ; Ben Smith and Arabella Thorp 'The legal basis for the invasion of Afghanistan' House of Commons Library SN/IA/5340
41      IPSOS Mori 'Support for War in Afghanistan - Trends 2001' http://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/poll.aspx?oItemId=2399
42      The Deaths of Afghans. Civilian Fatalities in Afghanistan, 2001-2012 http://www.thenation.com/afghanistan-database
43      'Operation Enduring Freedom' http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/ops/enduring-freedom-ops-air.htm

33      J. Moran, From Northern Ireland to Afghanistan. British Military Intelligence Operations, Ethics and Human Rights (Dartmouth: Ashgate 2013) pp117-18
34      L. Neville, Special Operations Forces in Afghanistan (Oxford: Osprey), p19.
35      Bergen 2011: 72-86; Neville, Special Operations Forces pp19-20
36      Neville, Special Operations Forces p26
37      Neville, Special Operations Forces pp27-9
38      Neville, Special Operations Forces p8
39      Intelligence and Security Committee, The Handling

required more support.[44]

Indeed, the Daily Telegraph's timeline of the Libyan conflict has only one entry from the end of March to the end of June 2011,[45] raising the question of what happened in between. The key was the provision of intelligence support and training to the rebel forces, allowing them to become credible internationally and overthrow the Gaddafi regime.[46] Ground troops were prohibited but a 'train and equip' mission was then deployed. Qatar helped in this. SF from Qatar, Britain and France were sent on a joint mission for training, command coordination. French went West, British East. Members of D Sqn SAS were operating in Brega and Misrata and a training base in southern Libya.[47] Special forces from France, Jordan and Qatar began to assist the rebels, not only in the final phases in August but generally, according to a NATO spokesman, 'helping them get better organised to conduct operations' and 'improve their tactics.'[48] UK special forces were involved with this.[49] Indeed, the 'western troops' caught on al Jazeera film in May were most likely special forces and MI6.[50] In terms of Qatari support:

> 'Qatari special forces are reported to have provided infantry training to Libyan fighters in the western Nafusa mountains and in eastern Libya. Qatar's military even brought Libyan rebels back to Doha for exercises. And in the final assault on Gaddafi's Bab al-Aziziya compound in Tripoli in late August, Qatari special forces were seen on the frontline. Qatar also gave $400m to the rebels, helped them export oil from Benghazi and set up a TV station in Doha.'[51]

The conflict was at a stalemate when they arrived. But French and Qatari units within days helped in the attack on Benghazi and the British in the attack on Sirte. SF were also important in finally breaking the siege of Misrata in May 2011 with British special forces coordinating air strikes and soldiers training and advising rebels.[52] Finally, the Libyan air operation preceded by ELINT and surveillance and recon

and worked effectively and showed the declining effectiveness of heavy armour and the declining need for aircraft compared to cruise missiles at least in the current context.[53] had apparently been provided with NATO intelligence and said of the loyalist artillery units guarding the advance on Misrata, "We don't worry about those units – they are Nato's concern."[54] Indeed, SAS soldiers and private security company operators assisted in forward air targeting in Misrata passing details of movements and locations which are verified by aerial surveillance ('one source of intelligence is not enough') to help the rebels break off the siege by loyalist forces.[55] but in May the training of selected Libyan rebels in fighting techniques, the UAE and UK and provided 1000 sets of body armour, night vision goggles and comms equipment (presumably satellite phones). Further comms equipment and ammunition was smuggled into Tripoli, following which 200 trained rebel fighters infiltrated back in.[56] At a signal from the NTC they began uprisings and recruited further fighters. 'Mohammed Eshkal, the head of Mohammed Megrayef Brigade - whose battalions were charged with protecting Tripoli's gates' was recruited to help the insurgents and once the operation was underway special forces and drones provided intelligence to the rebels whilst NATO air forces attacked strategic targets. The loyalist forces did not mount a widespread resistance and the capital was taken in a week falling in late August 2011.[57] Within weeks of Gaddafi's death the SF units were departing.[58]

The campaign was clearly effective in the short term. The anti-Gadaffi campaign had stalled. The first phase had seen an effective defeat in the field for the rebels, which led to them changing their position from refusing international assistance to calling for intervention to prevent mass civilian bloodshed which would result from Gaddafi retaking Benghazi. Following UNSC Resolution 1973 a large scale air campaign began to enforce a no-fly zone. However this phase also ended in a sort of stalemate, ending phase two of the conflict. The logjam was broken during phase three. The rebels, who had displayed little overall strategy and limited tactics, were unable to win against Gaddafi forces who themselves displayed little tactical skill but had

44      M. Urban 'Libya. Britain's Secret War' Newsnight BBC 2 broadcast 18.1.2012
45      http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/ africaandindianocean/libya/8714379/Libya-timeline-of-the- conflict.html
46      Private information , interview in London, 24 October 2014.
47      M. Urban 'Libya. Britain's Secret War' Newsnight BBC 2 broadcast 18.1.2012
48      CNN 'Foreign forces in Libya helping rebel advance' August 24 2011 http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/ africa/08/24/libya.foreign.forces/
49      Private information , interview in London, 24 October 2014.
50      "Al Jazeera video captures 'western troops on the ground' in Libya" Al Jazeera May 30 2011 http://www.mediaite. com/tv/al-jazeera-video-captures-western-troops-on-the- ground-in-libya/
51      I. Black 'Qatar admits sending hundreds of troops to support Libya rebels' Guardian October 26 2011.
52      M. Urban 'Libya. Britain's Secret War' Newsnight BBC 2 broadcast 18.1.2012

53      L. Page 'Libya fighting shows just how idiotic the Defence Review was', The Register 25 March 2011 http:// www.theregister.co.uk/2011/03/25/libya_analysis/?page=4
54      Mohammed Subka, a communications specialist in the Al Watum (My Home) brigade quoted in Stephen, C. Libya conflict: British and French soldiers help rebels prepare for Sirte attack' Guardian August 25 2011 http://www.guardian. co.uk/world/2011/aug/25/libya-conflict-british-french-soldiers- rebels-sirte
55      'Libya: SAS veterans helping NATO identify Gaddafi targets in Misrata', Guardian May 31 2011 http://www. guardian.co.uk/world/2011/may/31/libya-sas-veterans-misrata- rebels
56      S. Rayment 'How the special forces helped bring Gaddafi to his knees' Daily Telegraph August 28 2011.
57      S. Rayment 'How the special forces helped bring Gaddafi to his knees' Daily Telegraph August 28 2011.
58      Mark Urban 'Libya. Britain's Secret War' Newsnight BBC 2 broadcast 18.1.2012

better weapons and equipment. Covert intervention on the ground from the UK, USA, France and Qatar tilted the balance. However the long term effects have been such that the campaign at least by its stated aims of protecting civilians, has had significant negative effects on Libyan society. For example the fighting for Sirte resulted in air bombardment and ground fighting and a massive exodus from 'Area 2' in Sirte such that most of its 20,000 residents left. After Gaddafi fell Sirte was subject to looting and indiscriminate violence and progressively the whole of Libya has become deeply unstable and violent.[59]

The deployment of special forces was of dubious legality. Resolution 1973 did not provide for the direct intervention of foreign forces on the ground beyond being connected to enforcing a no fly zone, itself aimed to protect civilians not overthrow the regime. However the UN authorisation was in practice turned into a mission to remove Gaddafi because the NATO forces took as their strategy the idea that citizens could not be protected without disabling Libya's ground and air forces, an interesting view of the resolution and one likely to be the template for future interventions and one which arguably led to opposition in the UNSC for a similar resolution on Syria. But the links between intelligence and law go deeper than this. Public support for the Libyan intervention was split or had a narrow majority in favour.[60]

## Afghanistan [2]: funding militias

The limits of drone strikes in Afghanistan have already been evident in other reports so this section looks at another form of RW, the support of militias. After ISAF intervention stepped up in 2006 with the deployment of UK and Canadian troops to Afghanistan's eastern provinces this move brought the Taliban in and set up a long running confrontation which after four years ISAF showed no sign of winning.[61] Seeking new tactics to break the logjam (and enable an exit which could be claimed as a completed mission) the ISAF forces supported the development of local militias, known generally as 'Afghan Security Guards.' For example, even in the north which had previously been more secure the threat by insurgent forces increased and in 2009, the NDS (the Afghan intelligence service closely aligned with the US) and other authorities, such

as governors, began reactivating some of the militia networks that were powerful during the anti-Soviet resistance and civil war in a number of provinces, including Kunduz, Baghlan, and Takhar.[62] However in Kunduz and Baghlan local militias (arbakai) set up to protect against the Taliban as they spread their presence north turned to extortion and kidnap of the locals. Plans to later incorporate them into the Afghan Local Police were met with dismay by local leaders.[63] Meanwhile in the east, in Paktika Province, one 400 man unit under 'Commander Azizullah' was credited with bringing security to parts of the region. But it also engaged in execution style killings, extortion and sexual assault. Such units are often composed of ethnic minorities in the area as ISAF are more convinced they will not defect to the Taliban. Thus Azizullah is an ethnic Uzbek in a predominantly Pashtun area.[64] Similarly in Kandahar in the southeast Abdul Razzik, ostensibly a commander in the Border Police, effective ran a 250 strong unit that kept the Spin Boldak area free from Taliban influence and was later provided with special forces assistance and more freedom to operate around Kandahar. His human rights record had caused ISAF to distance itself from him but later in 2010 he was given a prominent security role despite credible allegations of extortion and violence. Razzik's position in the Border police was less significant than his role as the commander of an auxiliary force seen as particularly effective in killing Taliban.[65]

Some concern over the loose nature of the militias coupled with the strategy of Afghanising the conflict led to another organisational change, the Afghan Local Police, created in 2010. As with the Iraqi Police Commandos, the 'police' in the title of the ALP is a misnomer. The ALP to an extent brought the local irregular 'defence' forces under one umbrella[66] but its mission was and is fuzzy:

> The directive creating the ALP is vague about its powers. Rules about the ALP's right to search and detain, where individuals can be detained, the length and conditions of detention, and the process for handing over detainees to the national police are unclear. ALP units undergo three weeks of training compared to the six weeks (soon to be eight weeks) for basic patrol officers in the national police force[67]

59      Mark Urban Newsnight BBC 2 broadcast 6.3.2012; Patrick Cockburn 'Three years after Gaddafi, Libya is imploding into chaos and violence' Independent March 16 2014; D. Kirkpatrick, 'Libyan Militias Seize Control of Capital as Chaos Rises' New York Times September 1 2014.
60      Public support for Libyan intervention Samira Shackle 'Libya polls show that British public is divided' New Statesman March 22 2011 http://www.newstatesman.com/blogs/the-staggers/2011/03/british-public-support-action ; Sharath Srinivasan 'A Reluctant Responsibility to Protect? UK Attitudes Towards Libya Intervention' Huffington Post 19 August 2011 http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/yougov-cambridge/a-reluctant-responsibilit_b_930548.html
61      J. Fergusson, A Million Bullets (London: Bantam 2008), chapter four

62      Human Rights Watch, Just don't Call it a Militia (New York: Human Rights Watch 2011) p27.
63      M. Mashal, 'Rogue militias abuse rural Afghans', Al Jazeera, 12 January 2011 http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/01/201111114112880358.html
64      J. Cavendish, 'Afghanistan's Dirty War: Why the Most Feared Man in Bermal District Is a U.S. Ally', October 4 2011 http://juliuscavendish.com/2011/10/04/afghanistans-dirty-war-why-the-most-feared-man-in-bermal-district-is-a-u-s-ally/
65      M. Hastings, The Operators (London: Orion 2012) pp64-67
66      Human Rights Watch, Just don't Call it a Militia p24
67      Human Rights Watch, Just don't Call it a Militia p5; see also pp56-57.

By 2012 the ALP was 13,000 strong and then rose to over 16,000 and by 2013 over 30,000 ALP were operating in 92 districts.[68] But in late 2012 ISAF declared late in the year it was suspending recruitment and re-vetting ALP members - not due to the violence they were accused of but because a number of ALP members had killed the ISAF soldiers who were training them. These groups are less effective than the 'Sons of Iraq.' Whilst they may provide some rudimentary security in all these areas there have been credible reports of theft, extortion, sexual assault and extra judicial killings by them.[69] This is of concern since many ALP are recruited, trained and mentored by the Special Operations Forces.[70] For example, Lal Mohammed whose father and brother were killed by ALP in 2010 argued:

> I went to Special Forces and complained that one of the ALP commanders killed my father. They told me that this is not their business and that I should talk to the police. I went to the chief of police in Shindand and was told they cannot do anything because Special Forces are supporting ALP, we cannot go challenge them.[71]

As the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan found, that the central directorate in Kabul had to intervene to initiate investigations suggesting 'that district level oversight and accountability mechanisms have not developed to sufficient capacity.'[72] Indeed, the latest reports show that Afghan Local Police have taken heavy casualties (1000) whilst being accused of human rights violations and responsible for 121 civilian casualties in 2013 (around 30 in 2012).[73]

## Mali: assisting in a more planned operation

In Mali a range of insurgent groups began operating against the government in 2012. One force was Tuareg separatists, bolstered by the arrival of fellow Tuaregs who had been employed be Gaddafi worked with Ansar Dine (itself apparently allied with al Qaeda in the Islamic

Maghreb (AQIM) and the Movement for Oneness and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO) to undermine government control of northern Mali in an attempt to form a Muslim sharia state.[74] The rebels success led the Malian government to request assistance from the French government which responded with Operation Serval. Approximately 4,000 French troops, 2,000 Chadian troops supported by airpower and armour reimposed control over a string of towns in northern Mali.[75] A number of countries provided aircraft for troop transport[76] and 'the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Denmark provided tactical transport aircraft and battlefield support helicopters. The UK provided a Sentinel reconnaissance aircraft and the US deployed MQ-1 Predator and MQ-9 Reaper UAVs to Niger and in-flight refuelling aircraft from a base in the UK.'[77] UK special forces troops and MI6 personnel were in also Mali in an intelligence and advisory capacity.[78] The UK also funded through the UN the training of West African security forces.[79]

A YouGov survey commissioned by the Sun showed that more than six in ten (63%) people were against deploying British troops to fight against rebels in Mali, compared to 15% who in favour. However almost half (49%) of the public supported the government's decision to send transport planes to aid the French military campaign in Mali, with (31%) opposed. Remote Warfare did have (patchy) support.[80] Defence secretary Philip Hammond made it clear that the UK would not provide boots on the ground.[81]

The Mali intervention was short, but stabilised the country, set the context for a UN mission and later Presidential elections and negotiations with insurgent groups. Operation Serval was followed by a UN peacekeeping force of 6000 French, Chadian and

68      A. Cordesman, The Afghan War in 2013 Vol.3 Security and the ANSF (Centre for Strategic and International Studies/Rowman and Littlefield 2013) p115
69      H. Barr, 'Afghan police reform should be about more than protecting soldiers', Guardian, 7 September 2012 http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2012/sep/07/afghan-police-reform-protecting-soldiers ; V. Felbab-Brown, 'Afghanistan Trip Report V: The Afghan Local Police: "It's Local, So It Must Be Good" - Or Is It?' Brookings Foreign Policy Trip Report 9 May 2012 http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2012/05/09-afghan-police-felbabbrown ; Human Rights Watch, Just don't Call it a Militia pp29-42
70      And also by the British Royal Marines https://www.gov.uk/government/news/royal-marines-help-train-latest-batch-of-afghan-police-officers
71      quoted in Human Rights Watch, Just don't Call it a Militia p80.
72      quoted in Cordesman The Afghan War in 2013.
73      M. Stancati 'Left Unmoored, Afghan Local Police Pose New Risk', Wall Street Journal March 24 2014 http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304679404579459270523670760

74      http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/08/iyad_ag_ghaly_re-eme.php
75      France 24 3 February 2013 http://www.france24.com/en/20130203-france-army-islamist-rebels-air-strikes-north-mali-bases/
76      The US (Operation Juniper Micron), UK (Operation Newcombe), UAE, Netherlands, Canada and Sweden.
77      R. Reeve and Z. Pelter 'From New Frontier to New Normal: Counter-terrorism operations in the Sahel-Sahara', Remote Control Project Briefing (London Remote Control Project 2014) p10.
78      N. Hopkins 'UK special forces active in Mali' Guardian 22 January 2013.
79      'Mali crisis: 330 UK military personnel sent to West Africa', BBC News 29 January 2013 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21240676
80      'More than half (55%) of Brits would support the decision to send spy planes to help gather military intelligence for French and Mali troops, compared to just over a quarter (26%) who would oppose this. 44% of people say they would be in favour of Britain providing intelligence officers, special forces and drones to help support French and Mali forces, while 35% are against this action.' Cordelia Nelson 'Majority oppose UK troops in Mali' 30 January 2013 http://yougov.co.uk/news/2013/01/30/majority-oppose-uk-troops-mali/
81      'Mali crisis: 330 UK military personnel sent to West Africa' ,BBC News 29 January 2013 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-21240676

Malian troops although it should be noted that by early 2014 three insurgent groups were active again: AQIM, Ansar Dine and the Movement for Unity and Jihad in West Africa (MUJAO).[82] This led the French to assert:

> Now there is a concern for us and for the countries in the area to make sure there is no upsurge (in terrorism) as there are still major risks that jihadists will develop in the zone that goes from the Horn of Africa to Guinea-Bissau.[83]

Thus Operation Barkhane began with 3,000 soldiers supported by drones, helicopters and fighter jets putting a lid on Mali and the Sahel generally with the support of five African nations (Mali, Mauritania, Chad, Niger, and Burkina Faso).[84] This has solidified French power in the region. The French have a tactical base at Gao in Mali, a special forces base a Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso, intelligence gathering bases (including drones) at Niamey in Niger, an air force base in Chad and military bases at Tessalit (Mali) Madama (in Niger) and Faya Largeau (Chad). These add to permanent military bases in Senegal, Ivory Coast and Senegal. French forces now have a permanent RW capability in the Sahel.[85]

The case studies have been used to provide the basis for a framework for evaluating RW. From the interventions above at least six variables can be drawn:

1. Strategy - did RW achieve its aims?

2. Proportionality: what were the Rules of Engagement and Civilian casualties? How did they relate to aims of RW and the resistance to these?

3. Cost? Was RW used because it was cheaper?

4. Did RW have domestic sanction?

5. Did RW have international sanction?

6. What were the long term effects?

These six points also raise a longer term question, how has RW fitted in (if at all) with the UK's wider security strategy? The next section discusses this.

# Remote Warfare and UK Security Strategy

One of the issues highlighted by RW is whether it is pursued as a coherent strategy. Here some comparison with Israel and the US will be provided after a discussion of the UK.

## The relation of RW to British strategy

British strategy at the moment is unclear. Ironically this means RW may become more important as it both functions as part of an overall strategy or as a 'strategy of tactics' - an end in itself.

The lack of British strategy can be highlighted by two differing views of British security. Recently Lord Stirrup[86] argued that the UK's security view should be global 'because we are still a global nation' and the UK should work with Australia and the USA to achieve UK aims.[87] Similarly former Security Minister Lord West had stated the previous year:

'Even if we are in the top six, so we should be. We are the fifth or sixth richest country in the world; we are a permanent member of the Security Council. Unlike many nations, we have a responsibility for 14 dependencies world wide. The Government recently reiterated our responsibility for defence of those dependencies. We run global shipping from London, the sinews that hold the global trading village together and are a huge earner for this nation. We are the largest European investor in South Asia, South-East Asia, Australasia and key parts of the Pacific Rim. Global stability is crucial to our investments and our nation's wealth and security.'[88]

This seems an example of the strategic confusion that is British strategy in the current conjuncture. The UK has a shrinking military capacity and a history of military deployments of limited effectiveness[89] and the UK is 'Losing Control'[90] of the Middle East, but senior figures in the UK still call for a global scope and ambition for UK security strategy, including having a position on China as a 'threat.'[91] This in part explains

82      J. Follorou 'Jihadists return to northern Mali a year after French intervention', Guardian Weekly 11 March 2014 http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/mar/11/mali-jihadists-return-after-france-mission

83      Defence Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian quoted in the article cited below.

84      'French military to extend Mali 'counterterrorism' operations into Sahel' France 24/AFP 13 July 2014 http://www.france24.com/en/20140713-france-military-serval-mali-terrorist-aqim-sahel/ ; Laura Grossman 'Ansar Dine leader resurfaces, urges expulsion of France from Mali' Long War Journal http://www.longwarjournal.org/archives/2014/08/iyad_ag_ghaly_re-eme.php ;

85      R. Reeve and Z. Pelter 'From New Frontier to New Normal: Counter-terrorism operations in the Sahel-Sahara', Remote Control Project Briefing (London Remtoe Control Project 2014) pp26-28; 'France's new plan to counter jihadism in Africa' France 24, 31 July 2013 http://www.france24.com/en/20140731-interactive-map-france-africa-military-operation-barkhane-jihadists-sahel-sahara/

86      Air Chief Marshal Sir Jock Stirrup was Chief of the Defence Staff 2006-2010.

87      Sir Jock Stirrup, testimony at the 'Towards the Next Defence and Security Review' Defence and Security Committee 18 June 2014 (broadcast BBC Parliament 20 June 2014).

88      Lord West (former Security Minister) House of Lords Debates, 8 January 2013, c115.

89      F. Ledwidge, Losing Small Wars (Yale: Yale University Press 2011).

90      P. Rogers, Losing Control (London Pluto 2010) chapters eight and nine.

91      According to Sir Jock, China's actions 'pose risks to international security and although they are geographically very far removed from us in this globalised world the effects will almost certainly be felt here.'

the continuing investment in huge pieces of equipment such as aircraft carriers. But in the absence of their practical readiness or effectiveness RW can 'fill the gap'- hence the UK government's involvement in Libya, its attempted involvement in Syria and its urge to be involved in air strikes in Iraq.

Alternatively Lord Richards[92] argued the UK did not have a strategy at all, the strategy document being really a series of foreign policy goals but that in practice the UK did follow a regional rather than a global strategy and that the focus for the near future would in combatting militant jihadism because 'you only need a few as we see in Nigeria to take agin their own governments and you've got a problem.'[93] This is still a recipe for RW since such a situation is likely to occur and reoccur across the globe and so the barrier for intervention is thus low and RW can meet it.[94] Indeed global risk and uncertainty is a major justification for RW. For example in terms of rationale as PM David Cameron argued in the midst of the Libyan deployment:

> 'Events over the last year, especially the profound changes under way in north Africa, have underlined the wisdom of this approach: few predicted an Arab spring even six months before it occurred—powerfully illustrating the need for a highly adaptable posture. The campaign in Libya showed it was right to keep balanced armed forces, right to retain a significant RAF fast-jet capability, right to focus on building practical co-operation with the UAE and Qatar, and right to be buying more drones, tanker aircraft, helicopters and intelligence gathering capability.'[95]

However in addition to RW being a stopping gap in the light of confused thinking over defence as the UKs role changes, there is also a problem of material capability. The UK deployments in Afghanistan and Iraq wore down British military capability apart from special forces and as the Defence Select Committee argued in 2011:

> 'We dispute the Prime Minister's assertion that the UK has a full spectrum defence capability. We note that this view has been rejected by the single Service Chiefs. Indeed the Armed Forces

Minister acknowledged that the UK has not had a full spectrum capability for many years, speaking instead of delivering a wide spectrum of military capabilities in the future.'[96]

A leaked MoD document also accepted that the UK military's capacity for deployment was very restricted in comparison with previous eras:

> 'In illustration the loss of an aircraft carrier in 1950 would have been a serious blow but unlikely to prevent the military from eventually achieving its aim. In 1980 the loss of an aircraft carrier in Operation Corporate would have terminated the operation. In 2020 the loss of a carrier would be catastrophic and could not be recovered from within the campaign.'[97]

Implicitly this is a further rationale for remote warfare – it reduces the threat to the UK military from a 'gamble' to a 'risk.'[98] Thus British defence thinking argues: 'We will maintain the size of our regular Special Forces front line units, and significantly enhance support capabilities.'[99]

Further, the report later argues that the public aversion to casualties may be avoided by investing in UAVs, cyber capacity, the use of special forces and the use of proxy forces who are prepared to accept casualties.[100] In addition, the unclassified document International Defence Engagement Strategy concerns the use of tools short of combat operations to achieve influence. Included in Security and 'Non-Combat' Operations are counter terrorism capacity building, special forces operations and information operations and embargoes and interdictment[101], precisely the sort of operations covered by Remote Warfare.[102]

In sum, there is not much evidence of British strategy in the accepted sense of the term – no real rational idea of Britain's role in the world.[103] As a senior Defence

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92      General Sir David Richards was Chief of the Defence Staff 2010-2013.
93      Lord Richards testimony at the 'Towards the Next Defence and Security Review' Defence and Security Committee 18 June 2014 (broadcast BBC Parliament 20 June 2014).
94      With regard to Syria Richards argued Assad could have been/should have been overthrown by building up a new Syrian army across the border and with Arab state support over one year. This would undoubtedly have involved UK training, special forces, intelligence and for forward air control and air support in practice, linking UK RW to a conventional operation. Lord Richards testimony at the 'Towards the Next Defence and Security Review' Defence and Security Committee 18 June 2014 (broadcast BBC Parliament 20 June 2014).
95      Prime Minister, Written Ministerial Statements — Prime Minister: Strategic Defence and Security Review (First Annual Report) 7 December 2011.

96      House of Commons Defence Committee, 'The Strategic Defence and Security Review and the National Security Strategy', 6th Report of Session 2010-2012 (London TSO 2011), p.33.
97      MoD, Risk. The Implications of Current Attitudes to Risk for the Joint Operational Concept, pp.2-3 available on the Guardian site http://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/interactive/2013/sep/26/mod-study-attitudes-risk
98      The 'operate' area is one in which military capacity is appropriate to the task. The 'risk' area is one where the military may suffer setbacks but can cope. The 'gamble' area involves challenges that cannot be overcome and failures will lead to a situation where no recover is possible. MoD, Risk. The Implications of Current Attitudes to Risk for the Joint Operational Concept, p.2.
99      Operations, Directorate, Ministry of Defence, letter to the author 5 October 2014.
100     Risk. The Implications of Current Attitudes to Risk for the Joint Operational Concept, pp.6-7.
101     International Defence Engagement Strategy, p.2.
102     The report also argued that public opinion could be moulded to increase support for UK military operations, causing some comment in the media.
103     Part of this, to critics, be drawn from traditional Conservative ideology or practice: 'this notion of managed decline is in the Tory DNA…Labour's culture and tradition is

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Committee politician pointed out,

> At the moment Britain cannot claim to have a coherent policy – but we need one sooner rather than later.[104]

In this confused context RW has been increasing evident as a stop gap. British interventions in Sierra Leone in 2000 and Libya in 2011 were enacted because they were 'do-able' rather than because they fitted with an overall strategy. The British experience in Sierra Leone was undertaken beyond the mission statement and the covert war in Libya was in fact in precise opposition to the UK's own officially stated defence strategy and David Cameron's public statements.[105] The UK is lacking here and more debate is needed as to exactly how RW tools are going to be used and to what effect[106], a criticism that the opponents of the intervention in Libya made in and out of the House of Commons in late September 2014 when the Government was urging support for airstrikes against IS in Iraq.[107]

It can be argued that in contrast RW fits coherently into Israel's overall national and regional security strategy.[108] In France, RW seems to have been part of a coherent strategy applied to the Sahel as an area French legitimate security interest rather than part of some generalised approach. It might lead to mission creep but that is a different matter. In the USA it has been deployed more consistently and Remote Warfare in US strategy appears to be a far more coherent fit (even if the strategy itself has been counterproductive). The US has employed RW in various guises since the 1980s, particularly when there is concern over planting boots on the ground, one reason RW has accelerated in the period after Iraq (2003-2011). RW also fits in more neatly with US power projection. The US' global network of 'lilly pad' bases allows it to deploy RW more easily. To be sure, even with the US' more consistent approach, as Zala and Rogers argue RW does little

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*internationalist and that requires capability.' Gisela Stuart MP, member of the Defence Committee, UK Parliament, interview by Jon Moran 6 Oct 2014.*

*104 Email communication to the author from Sir Bob Russell MP 15 September 2014.*

*105 R. Dover and M. Phythian, 'Lost Over Libya: The 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review' Defence Studies Vol 11 No 3 (2011) pp420-44.*

*106 The UK has a limited appreciation of context and trends, for example 'military intelligence's sheer capacity to do long term engagement and analysis on the ground is appalling.' Gisela Stuart MP, member of the Defence Committee, UK Parliament, interview by Jon Moran 6 Oct 2014.*

*107 See the comments by retired military commander Jonathan Shaw 'We can only beat Islamic State with Muslim support', London Evening Standard, 5 September 2014 http://www.standard.co.uk/comment/jonathan-shaw-we-can-only-beat-islamic-state-with-muslim-support-9714234.html*

*108 D. Byman, A High Price. The Triumphs and Failures of Israeli Counterterrorism (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011). Byman is critical of Israeli strategy but he does set out a coherent security strategy pursued by the Israeli state towards the Occupied Territories.*

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to address the long term embedded issues which are connected to new conflicts or the rise of new powers.[109] The failure of large scale campaigns combined with the development of new technologies has led to remote warfare.[110]

# Ethics and human rights in remote warfare

## Ethics

RW by itself is neither ethical nor unethical. RW can be a tool of empire or a method of humanitarian intervention or a counter terrorism tactic. RW may be ethical at the tactical level when used instead of missions which would otherwise result in large scale civilian casualties. A stark example is Somalia in the early 1990s, a country in which the state had collapsed after the Cold War and which had seen fractionalised political conflict develop. The UN established a mission to first provide aid and then attempt to ensure stability. This involved targeting one 'warlord,' Mohammad Aideed, perceived to be contributing to the instability. US Marines were despatched on an arrest mission to capture Aideed and two of his lieutenants after 24 Pakistani peacekeepers had been killed and Aideed's clan was singled out as responsible. An air attack before the raid had killed a number of Aideed's advisors and supporters but in a confusing bureaucratic context this was followed by a raid by US Rangers which captured two of Aideed's aides (but not Aideed).[111] The fatalities in this operation were significant. The US Rangers lost 16, the US infantry 2, the Malaysian army 2 and the Pakistani army 2. Somali casualties are estimated between 500-1500.[112] If the alternative to this is a drone strike this might meet the target of proportionality. (The prior question is whether such an operation should be authorised in the first place.)

Alternatively RW can protect civilians, stabilise a country, or defeat insurgents. In Sierra Leone RW stabilised the country and halted a civil war which would have dragged on and cost many more lives (compare for example the long term conflicts in Liberia, the Democratic Republic of Congo or Sudan which Sierra Leone might well have replicated). In Afghanistan from 2001-06 RW removed the Taliban (a government

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*109 B. Zala and P. Rogers The 'Other' Global Security Challenges: Socioeconomic and Environmental Realities after the War on Terror RUSI Journal, Aug 2011, Vol. 156, No. 4; Paul Rogers A century on the edge: from Cold War to hot world, 1945–2045 International Affairs 90: 1 (2014) p.109 .*

*110 P. Rogers, 'A century on the edge: from Cold War to hot world, 1945–2045' International Affairs 90: 1 (2014) pp.100-01*

*111 M. Kaus 'What Black Hawk Down Leaves Out' Slate January 21 2002 http://www.slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/kausfiles_special/2002/01/what_black_hawk_down_leaves_out.3.html*

*112 The United States Army in Somalia 1992-1994 http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/Somalia/Somalia.htm ;Mark Bowden, Black Hawk Down (London Bantam 1999).*

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that had been recognised by only three states) and Al Qaeda, introduced a framework for (imperfect) elections and stabilised the security situation (the Taliban did not control the whole country and were ruling by force in the areas they did control).

Alternatively RW can recklessly undermine regimes or promote even more bloodshed and lead to dangerous long term situations. In Afghanistan from 2010 particularly, RW was used in conjunction with conventional methods (a US troop surge) to try and defeat a resurgent Taliban, allow a drawdown of ISAF troops, stabilise the security situation and increase legitimacy for the government. RW in practice undermined these aims and helped spread the conflict to Pakistan. In Pakistan RW primarily through drones and intelligence operations has had similar blowback effects.[113] A further issue with RW is if it prolongs a conflict instead of ending it. It may actually be counter -productive and more harming to civilians to externally sustain a conflict that would otherwise see defeat for one side or exhaustion on both sides and a peace agreement.[114] What is more moral in this case? Letting the conflict burn out? Or fuelling it or maintaining a bloody stasis? Syria is an example of this; RW as pursued by Qatar and other countries such as Turkey has kept the conflict boiling but with no winner. Syria is not an example of full remote warfare since there is no air cover, special forces activity or training (that we know of) at least by Western states but there is by Qatar and it has not had appreciable effects in deposing Assad and in fact seems to have ramped up the local violence.[115] In Libya RW successfully toppled the Gaddafi regime but militarised the country and left it open to disorder and widespread human rights abuses afterwards. Thus, if RW is pursued without context or long term planning it may be so irresponsible as to be unethical. Therefore RW is not a strategy but it may have strategic effects. Finally but linked with this point, if RW is pursued on an ongoing basis as in the 'war on terror' one of the problems may be

that (as Graham argues in respect of urban warfare) it militarizes 'everyday spaces' that were formally not so.[116] Conventional warfare may have an end. Remote Warfare may be a 'forever war.'

## Human Rights & Accountability

It can be argued that Remote Warfare is also 'remote' from normal accountability. This problem has been highlighted in the US already.[117] The crucial point to make is what Rules of Engagement operate in Remote Warfare. US drones have caused significant civilian casualties:

> a much more difficult questions arise about the use of armed drones outside traditional theatres of armed conflict and in particular in areas such as the Federal Administered Tribal Areas of Pakistan, parts of Yemen, Somalia and so forth where the United States in particular is not directly engaged in armed conflict…in the recognised sense and that has given rise to some very difficult questions of international law on which there is no consensus. The fourth point is…far and away the greatest number of civilian casualties have been by drone and far and away the greatest areas of concern was the CIA use of drones in Pakistan…[due to the their policy of NCND (neither confirm nor deny)] they are not the right organisation to be engaged in the direct infliction of casualties through the delivery of ordnance through the air, rather like giving MI6 a fleet of aircraft and telling them to go off and do what they needed to do. It's an unthinkable proposition in this jurisdiction [the UK].'[118]

In the British case:

> 'Remotely Piloted Aircraft Systems have also played an important role in helping to minimise the number of civilian casualties during operations in Afghanistan. The ability to provide persistent over watch means that only properly established military objectives are targeted and

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*113      Effects of drones strikes have been to relocate terrorists not defeat them. Following a programme of drones strikes in the FATA and Pakistani Army conventional operations in Waziristan and the Swat valley, terrorists appear to have relocated to Karachi and from 2010 Karachi saw an upsurge of political and criminal violence which is destabilising the city. Wali Aslam Terrorist Relocation and the Societal Consequences of US drones strikes in Pakistan Remote Control Project Briefing Paper (London ORG 2014) pp2-6.*
*114      E. Luttwak 'Give War A Chance' Foreign Affairs July/ August 1999, pp.36-44.*
*115      Qatar has played a RW role in Syria. Qatar may have provided between $1 billion and $3 billion to opposition movements in and outside Syria, including equipping one opposition 'brigade' Ahfad al-Rasoul and buying light arms and with assistance from Turkish intelligence shipping them to the rebels. The Qataris have also given media and diplomatic support to the opposition, including setting up a 'shadow' opposition embassy in Qatar. See the excellent report on Qatar by Roula Khalaf and Abigail Fielding-Smith, 'How Qatar seized control of the Syrian revolution' FT Magazine May 17 2013 http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/f2d9bbc8-bdbc-11e2-890a-00144feab7de.html#axzz3CjuMSkZP*

*116      S. Graham, Cities Under Siege. The New Urban Militarism (London Verso 2011) p255*
*117      'The Director of the CIA is a former Congressman from California. He may be a great guy but it doesn't mean he has the training and experience to make decisions about when an airstrike is legitimate or not. For the last year and a half we've carried out more robotic drone strikes in Pakistan than we did manned bomber strikes during the Kosovo war just a decade ago. So by the measures of the Kosovo war, we are at war but unlike the Kosovo war we didn't have a debate about it in our Congress or Parliaments or in the UN. The media doesn't report it every night breathlessly like they did the Kosovo war. We just do it.' Peter Singer quoted in Remote Control War (Zoot Pictures/CBC 2011), broadcast on PBS America 25/6/2014.*
*118      Ben Emmerson, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and countering terrorism, testimony at the UK Parliament Joint Select Committee hearing 'Counter terrorism and human rights' broadcast on BBC PARLIAMENT March 26 2014.*

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strikes can be called off if it has emerged that civilians may be in danger...In over 59,000 hours of Reaper operations there has been only one known incident that resulted in the deaths of civilians.'[119]

The US program after criticism has now moved from the CIA to the DoD and civilian casualties have dropped markedly.[120] So drones themselves like RW are not unethical – it is the ROE with which they are governed. As one senior defence politician argued:

> "I support the use of such equipment for intelligence gathering, and air strikes where the accuracy and target is 100 per cent guaranteed – not the way in which the State of Israel operates…"[121]

Similar issues are evident with regard to the use of special forces. Debate in Northern Ireland was evident as to what Rules of Engagement the SAS were given in their planned actions against republican paramilitaries. After a number of civilians had died in early engagements, types of deployment and ROE were changed.[122] In Afghanistan the SAS in an after campaign report claimed that a 'shoot to wound' policy put their lives at risk as Taliban fighters would carry on engaging after being hit by 5.56mm rounds; it recommended changing the policy and issuing heavier 7.62 rounds.[123]

However a more critical approach argues:

> 'While most of these troops are busy mentoring and training Afghan forces, 500 British special forces soldiers are engaged in intense operations designed to kill as many Taliban commanders as possible. That such operations are of questionable legality is clear from the special (and secret) legal advice given to special forces, different to that given to the rest of the British armed forces.'[124]

RW in the form of drones, SF or the recruitment of local paramilitaries may allow warfare without scrutiny and with a laxer approach to civilian casualties.[125] It can be tightened up – as argued, drone strikes can be carried out in different ways to reduce casualties.[126] But there remains a lack of accountability by NCND operations and by the use of local militias under the 'control' of local government, and the nature of the conflict between Western states and militant jihadism continually pushes the boundaries of accountability:

> 'there is a general weight of opinion to the effect that the existing framework of law ought not be unearthed, in other words that the Geneva Convention should remain our guiding principles for armed conflict without substantial amendment but at the same time they need to be interpreted and applied in light of the fact that in the modern world it's difficult to find an armed conflict which is not an asymmetrical armed conflict where one group is a non-state armed group and where the targeting rules of humanitarian law become extremely complicated to apply…the dividing line between who is and who is not a legitimate military target and who is not is an extremely complex and sensitive one. That is an area in which states are notoriously jealous in guarding their information as to how they interpret the principle of direct participation by civilians in hostilities.'[127]

119    Operations, Directorate, Ministry of Defence, letter to the author 5 October 2014.
120    Ben Emmerson, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and countering terrorism, testimony at the UK Parliament Joint Select Committee hearing 'Counter terrorism and human rights' broadcast on BBC PARLIAMENT March 26 2014.
121    Email communication to the author from Sir Bob Russell MP, member of the UK Parliament Defence Committee 15 September 2104.
122    J. Moran From Northern Ireland to Afghanistan. British Military Operations, Ethics and Human Rights (Ashgate 2013) chapter 2.
123    M. Nichol 'SAS to use bigger bullets to kill enemy outright after claiming 'shoot-to-wound' policy put their lives at risk' Daily Mail March 17 2013 http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2294631/SAS-use-bigger-bullets-kill-enemy-outright-claiming-shoot-wound-policy-lives-risk.html
124    R. Norton-Taylor and E. Macaskill 'Talking about Taliban killers is taboo in the UK' Guardian December 6 2011 http://www.theguardian.com/world/defence-and-security-blog/2011/dec/06/sas-afghanistan

125    For a discussion of these issues see K. Hofstra and E. Minor 'Losing Sight of the Human Cost. Casualty recording and remote control warfare', Remote Control Project Briefing Paper (London Oxford Research Group 2014) pp14-17.
126    A. Ross, J. Serle and T. Wills Tracking Drone Strikes in Afghanistan: A Scoping Study Remote Control Briefing Paper (London Oxford Research Group 2014) p10.
127    Ben Emmerson, the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights and countering terrorism, testimony at the UK Parliament Joint Select Committee hearing 'Counter terrorism and human rights' broadcast on BBC PARLIAMENT March 26 2014.

# Conclusion

1. Why is remote warfare employed in certain circumstances?

It avoids 'boots on the ground' and accountability. It substitutes for not having a proper strategic vision.

2. Why is it seen as effective?

It achieves limited aims such as the removal of a regime (Afghanistan, Libya) or the emergency support of a regime (Mali) in a short time and cost effectively.

3. What public debates have taken place before remote warfare has been deployed?

Very few. From Sierra Leone where the mission was expanded on the ground, to Libya, to Pakistan, debates have been limited. The one occasion a debate was permitted (Syria) the public rejected it.

4. What connection does it have with legitimacy or domestic public opinion and international opinion?

See above. RW is a way of engaging armed forces without engaging large scale public debate. It may also be a way of allowing the downsizing of UK troops e.g. in Afghanistan.

5. What are the aims of remote warfare?

Tactical rather than strategic – the removal of a regime or the shoring up of a weak state.

6. How is remote warfare carried out?

Through conventional or UAV airpower (However at the moment UK drones are 'currently only' used for surveillance, reconnaissance and intelligence, 'their ability to loiter over and survey areas for enemy activity and then feedback images and videos in real time means they are an invaluable asset to our forces on the ground or ships at sea.' ), special forces, special forces training of local troops, the use of local auxiliaries and the provision of intelligence. It is important to note that much remote warfare still involves killing on the ground face to face (by special forces and auxiliaries). The ROE for special forces are shrouded in secrecy so RW is advantageous tactically.

7. Is remote warfare a way of engaging in violence freer from the constraints which might come when a large deployment is made after conflict is officially declared?

Yes. See above 3. and 4.

8. What are the long term consequences of its practice?

Unpredictable. The case studies which have seen remote warfare used have seen negative long term ef-

fects. Sierra Leone was a relative success. Afghanistan seemed relatively successful but growing Taliban influence then required a large deployment which fuelled a conventional conflict. Libya is extremely unstable. Mali has stabilised but the French intervention has now expanded to all of West Africa and will keep going for the foreseeable future. RW cannot therefore change the strategic balance created by the 'war on terror' and its land invasion of Iraq in 2003 (see also 12).

9. Is it likely to require greater intervention in future?

Yes, see above.

10. Is it likely to have blowback for the forces using it or the local authorities which agree to its use?

Yes in Libya attacks on US interests saw the Ambassador killed. On a more strategic level drone use and intelligence operations in Pakistan have fuelled radicalism and support for the Pakistani Taliban.

11. It is likely to destabilise a country and lead to worsening public security?

This has been the case in Libya. In Afghanistan RW as practised in Helmand kept the province stable. Large scale deployments then stirred up a 'hornets' nest.' In Sierra Leone the country was stabilised. Mali has been stabilised. But the latter two countries received UN presence, aid and security support - something beyond RW. Where RW is the start and endpoint the result is likely to be cases like Libya and the relocation of terrorists e.g. to the unstable frontier zones of Pakistan.

12. Is it likely to reduce the soft power/legitimacy of those using it?

It depends on the case and on how it is viewed at a wider level (in the country concerned the UK may be viewed positively, in the wider region it may have a negative effect). Libyan and Syrian opposition wanted RW. In Libya the first calls from the opposition were for 'the West' to stay out. Then they urged Western support. Yet the intervention in Libya does not seem to have brought any long term rise in UK soft power across northern Africa, or affected its position in South Asia. In Syria the rebels immediately wanted Western support. Therefore Western legitimacy might have been harmed by not intervening in Syria. However Western non-intervention in Syria cannot credibly be stated as a reason for the rise of ISIS. Even if Assad had been toppled there is no reason why jihadists wouldn't have emerged in the aftermath particularly as any defeat of the Syrian state would have been a massive shock to society and led to deep problems with stabilisation and thus criticism of the West and the UK.

13. Is remote warfare likely to be increasingly employed whether suitable or not?

Yes. For the reasons outlined in 1 and 2. And in the British context where an overall security strategy is

lacking, RW can be pursued and the British state and military can be seen to be 'doing something.'

14. Is it a form of responsible conflict?

It depends on the context. With no long term strategy in mind it is not. RW can be evaluated according to criteria which could in theory be allocated 'points: 1 Strategy - did it achieve its aims? 2 Proportionality: what were the Rules of Engagement and Civilian casualties? How did they relate to aims of RW and the resistance to these? 3 Cost? 4 Did it have domestic sanction? 5 Did it have international sanction? 6 What were the long term effects?

**Evaluating UK RW**

| Country | Aim | Civilian casualties | Cost [£millions] | Domestic sanction? | International sanction? | Long term effects | Evaluation |
|---------|-----|---------------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|------------|
| Sierra Leone | Rescue kidnapees, stabilise country | 1991-2002 50,000[1] | 75.6[2] | No | In effect. British troops in country as part of UN mission. More deployed to rescue hostages and mission expanded by ground commander but not unreasonably.[3] | Stability. Militias defeated | Success |
| Afghanistan 2001-06 | Depose Taliban, eliminate Al Qaeda, institute new government, maintain security | Sep-Dec 2001 133 attacks 3127 casualties[4]  7,000 dead from 2001-07 | 20, 646  Overall figure | Yes | No formal authorisation for the attack by NATO and UN.  Subsequent occupation sanctioned by UN.[5] | Stability | Partial success – Taliban defeated but AQ escaped. Most provinces in Afghanistan peaceful. But substantial deaths in some provinces |
| Afghanistan 2006-14 | Defeat Taliban, implant democracy, promote development, provide security | Total civilian deaths in Afghanistan 2007-2012 16,179[6] | 20, 646 from 2006-13[7]  £2000 spent on drones 2007-2012[8] | No | Yes. ISAF presence and security tasking authorised by UN.[9] | British presence stoked up conflict. Taliban not defeated. Security remains patchy. RW now covering 2014 withdrawal | Failure |
| Mali | Defeat insurgents, stabilise government | | n/a | Yes | Yes requested by then President Dioncounda Traoré and supported by the UN.[10] | Insurgents defeated. Government stabilised | Success |
| Pakistan | Degrade Taliban and Al Qaeda | 20-50,000 deaths (civilian and combatant)[11] | Security aid cannot be separated from aid generally, estimated at 1,400 from 2010-2015[12] | No | No. | TTP now an established force in Af-Pak area, political instability nationally and instability | Failure |

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | | in zones like Karachi | |
| Libya | Protect civilians/depose government | 1-2000 casualties before NATO intervention. NATO intervention air strikes killed 55-77 civilians. The rest of the conflict saw 7000 deaths NOTE: Excluding airstrikes The figures include both civilian and combatant deaths.[13] | 238[14] | Narrow public support | Open to debate. Resolution 1973 provided for safe havens for civilians not the overthrow of the government[15] | Instability. No democracy. Expansion of militias. Little public security. Knock on effect which contributed to insurgency in Mali | Failure |

[1] 'FACTBOX: Sierra Leone's civil war' Reuters January 8 2008 http://www.reuters.com/article/2008/01/08/us-warcrimes-taylor-war-idUSL066107120080108 ;
Global Security http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/sierra_leone.htm cites that 1991-96 saw 15,000 deaths
[2] UK military operations since cold war have cost £34bn, says study' 'http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/23/uk-military-operations-costs
[3] BBC 'The brigadier who saved Sierra Leone' From Our Own Correspondent May 15 2010 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/programmes/from_our_own_correspondent/8682505.stm
[4] During Tommy Franks period in command Sep-Dec 2001 133 attacks 3127 casualties.
[5] Ian Sinclair 'Legal or Illegal? The 2001 US-British Attack on Afghanistan. Never Got the U.N. "Green Light" ' Global Research April 8 2014 http://www.globalresearch.ca/legal-or-illegal-the-2001-us-british-attack-on-afghanistan-never-got-the-u-n-green-light/5377115 ; Ben Smith and Arabella Thorp 'The legal basis for the invasion of Afghanistan' House of Commons Library SN/IA/5340
[6] 'Afghanistan civilian casualties' http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/2010/aug/10/afghanistan-civilian-casualties-statistics
[7] £20bn cost to the UK from 2006-13. See Oliver Wright 'Costly failures': Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan cost UK taxpayers £30bn Independent 27 May 2014 http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/costly-failures-wars-in-iraq-and-afghanistan-cost-uk-taxpayers-30bn-9442640.html
[8] Jack Serle 'UK government spends £2bn on drones' 26 September 2012 http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2012/09/26/uk-cost-of-drones-2/
[9] http://www.rs.nato.int/history.html
[10] Theodore Christakis and Karine Bannelier 'French Military Intervention in Mali: It's Legal but... Why? Part I' European Journal of International Law blog http://www.ejiltalk.org/french-military-intervention-in-mali-its-legal-but-why-part-i/#more-7483
[11] With 20-50,000 dead in Pakistan without a war being declared. Human Costs of War: Direct War Death in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Pakistan October 2001- April 2014. According to Pakistan intelligence 50,000 died 2001-2012. From 2008-2012 25,000 died including 3,000 Taliban and 5000 civilians. Shaun Waterman Heavy price: Pakistan says war on terror has cost nearly 50,000 lives there since 9/11 Washington Times March 27 2013 http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/mar/27/heavy-price-pakistan-says-war-terror-has-cost-near/
[12] 'UK aid money: the key datasets you need to know' http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/datablog/2012/sep/26/uk-aid-money-key-datasets
[13] Amnesty International estimated 55 deaths caused by air strikes and HRW estimated 77 deaths. However NATO flew 26,500 sorties including 9,700 strike sorties, destroying 5,900 military targets. 'Nato hits back at Libya's civilian deaths report' BBC News 14 May 2012 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-18062012 The civilian death toll was minimal. The problem in Libya was the fuelling of the violence in overthrowing Gadaffi. According to Alan Kuperman (a long standing conservative critic of intervention makes the case that as with Kosovo): 'In reality, when NATO intervened in mid-March 2011, Qaddafi already had regained control of most of Libya, while the rebels were retreating rapidly toward Egypt. Thus, the conflict was about to end, barely six weeks after it started, at a toll of about 1,000 dead, including soldiers, rebels, and civilians caught in the crossfire. By intervening, NATO enabled the rebels to resume their attack, which prolonged the war for another seven months and caused at least 7,000 more deaths.' Alan Kuperman', Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene' Belfer Center Policy Brief November 2013, page 2. 'In January 2013 Libya's new government drastically reduced estimates of the number of people who were killed in the revolution against Muammar Gaddafi's regime, concluding that 4,700 rebel supporters died and 2,100 were missing, with unconfirmed similar casualty figures on the opposing side.' Libya Civil War (2011) http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/libya-civil-war.htm
[14] UK military operations since cold war have cost £34bn, says study' 'http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/apr/23/uk-military-operations-costs
[15] Alan Kuperman', Lessons from Libya: How Not to Intervene' Belfer Center Policy Brief November 2013.