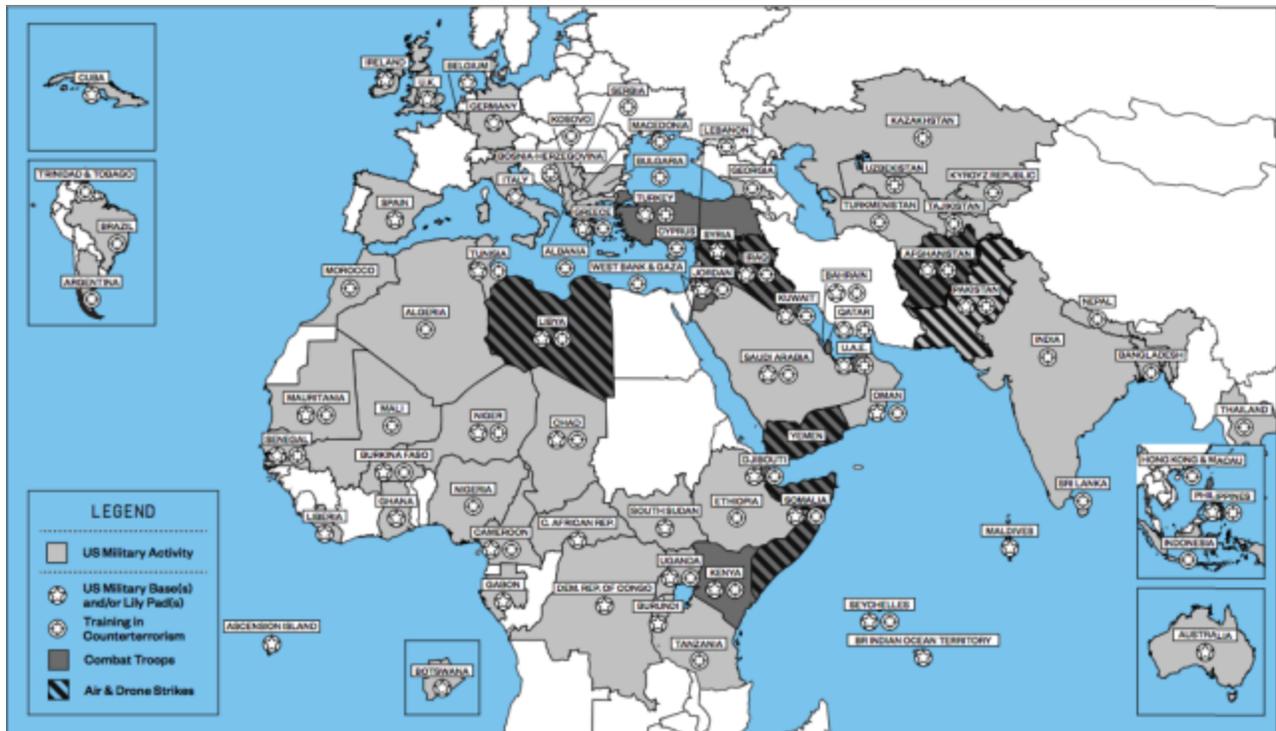# Where in the World Is the U.S. Military deployed in CT Missions - Everywhere

American counterterrorism forces are active in 40 percent of the world's countries – and their presence comes with striking repercussions.

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By Catherine Besteman and Stephanie Savell
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As we enter the 17th year of the United States' "war on terror," it is both appropriate, and necessary, to take stock of where our troops are located and for what purpose. The deaths of U.S. soldiers this fall in Niger were a stark reminder that much of the American public, and even many of our country's lawmakers, aren't exactly sure what the war on terror looks like, much less where many of our other military operations are located. According to a new map published this week by the Costs of War Project at Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs, the U.S. is waging this war on terror in 76 countries – or more simply put, 40 percent of the countries on this planet.

Courtesy of Costs of War Project/Brown University

What started with President George W. Bush's launch of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan in October 2001 is now a rapid expansion of the U.S. military footprint across the globe. Notably, beyond the Middle East, the tentacles of this expansion stretch into Africa more than any other region.

Right now, across Africa, the U.S. military is providing massive amounts of military technology, hardware, training and expertise to local African militaries and police forces. The continent is home to an "extensive archipelago of African outposts," including U.S. military bases, camps, compounds, port facilities, and "cooperative security locations." U.S. special operations forces have been deployed to track local insurgents across the African Sahel region. Drone strikes to kill terrorist targets have increased substantially (67 into Somalia since 2007, and 125 in Yemen in 2017 alone), causing hundreds of civilian casualties. African and U.S. forces have conducted joint military exercises across the continent.

This expansion is the unsurprising result of the military's emerging focus on Africa, inaugurated with the 2007 creation of AFRICOM. Perhaps this concentration reveals more about the fears of unknowability and criminality that continue to underlie U.S. views of that continent, rather than representing an effective military strategy to combat terrorism.

Several key voices influencing the Department of Defense, including national security expert Sean McFate, argued that enhanced security – training local militaries and police forces – was a necessary precursor to investing in economic development in the region. "Unlike traditional Unified Commands, AFRICOM will focus on war prevention rather than warfighting," reads the

[Department of Defense description](#) of AFRICOM's mission. This new "security paradigm" shifted U.S. investments in Africa away from diplomacy, democratic institutions, and civil society, towards military action.

In recent years, the U.S. has used militarized solutions for African challenges of all kinds. During the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, the U.S. sent 4,000 troops to help eradicate the disease (instead of helping, [they caused riots in local communities](#)). Taken altogether, this clearly shows that the militarization of Africa is a major U.S. foreign policy objective.

This militarization must be understood as part of a mushrooming of U.S. counterterrorism strategy across the globe. To this day, the government does not release information about counterterror activity to the public. In creating the map shown above, the Costs of War Project assembled this data in one place for the very first time. The project gathered information country-by-country from reputable news sources, government websites and expert input. Every article or passing mention in the U.S. Department of State's "[Country Reports on Terrorism](#)," for instance, provided a glimpse of a tiny node in an expansive network of shadowy U.S. combat operations.

Security forces around the world are being trained or assisted by the U.S. military in counterterrorism. Countries around the world are home to U.S. military bases and/or lily pads used in counterterror operations, host U.S. combat troops deployed in counterterror missions and are targeted by U.S. air and drone strikes.