The term “unlawful combatant” is used to refer to an individual who belongs to an armed group [1], in a context where either the individual or the group do not fulfil the conditions for combatant status [2]. The term was employed by the administration of President George W. Bush of the United States in its ‘global war on terror’ [3] to describe persons who are, in its view, neither combatants [4] nor civilians [5] but belong to a third category of persons who can be attacked at any time and can be detained indefinitely [6] without trial. It is also sometimes used as a synonym for “unprivileged belligerent [7]”.

See Unprivileged belligerent [7]; War on terror [3]; Combatants [4]; Civilians [5]; Detention [8]; Internment [6]; Terrorism and terrorists [9];
United States, Closure of Guantanamo Detention Facilities [12]

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ICRC, The Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts (Part B.) [14]

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Israel, Detention of Unlawful Combatants [16]

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