The intentional and pre-mediated use of lethal force, by a State or organized armed group against a specific individual outside their physical custody. Targeted killings occur both within and outside of armed conflicts [1]. Under IHL, they are problematic as, oftentimes, those targeted are geographically far removed from hostilities, and/or not necessarily directly participating in hostilities [2] at the time they are targeted. In the context of the war on terror [3], targeted killings against suspected terrorists [4], including “unlawful combatants [5]”, have occurred regularly. Drones [6] are frequently relied on to undertake such killings.

See Armed conflict [1]; Unlawful combatants [5]; War on terror [3]; Drones [6]; Terrorism and terrorists [4].

**CASES**

- **Israel, The Targeted Killings Case** [7]
- **UN, Statement of a Special Rapporteur on Drone Attacks** [8]
- **General Assembly, The use of drones in counter-terrorism operations** [9]
- **U.S., Lethal Operations against Al-Qa‘ida Leaders** [10]

ICRC, International Humanitarian Law and the challenges of contemporary armed conflicts in 2015 [12] (Paras. 60-64 [13])

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