

Armed drones need global regulation

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Ian Davis, NATO Watch, [letter, Financial Times](#), 10 October

Sir, Drone strikes have become much more central to US and UK military strategy (“Striking questions on drone attacks”, editorial, October 9).

The move to remote and electronic warfare in the US is being mirrored in Europe. At the Chicago summit in May, Nato partners signed a \$1.7bn contract with Northrop Grumman for the supply of five Global Hawk drones for surveillance and reconnaissance. Italy may well soon acquire the technology to deploy laser-guided bombs and Hellfire missiles for their six MQ-9 Reaper drones. The UK has already acquired the technology to arm its 10 Reaper drones.

These developments could encourage other Nato countries and US allies to acquire remotely piloted hunter-killer aircraft. The market for them is, potentially, huge. A US aerospace consultancy, Teal Group, has estimated that worldwide unmanned aerial vehicle spending will almost double to over \$89bn in the next 10 years. And like all weapon systems they will proliferate to the “bad guys”.

We need a serious public debate on the use of armed drones. An international agreement to regulate and limit their use is long overdue

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