

Germany's Secretive Drone Data Centers Responsible for Killing Thousands of Civilians

By [Reprise](#)

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Recent revelations over German complicity in US drone strikes will tomorrow cast a shadow over Chancellor Angela Merkel's talks with President Barack Obama in Washington.

Investigative journalists in Germany recently revealed Ramstein, a US base in the country, to be a major data centre for the secretive strikes, which have killed thousands of civilians in countries such as Yemen and Pakistan. Legal charity Reprise this week revealed that a strike in Yemen over the Easter weekend killed four builders on their way to work, leaving at least 20 children fatherless.

The Ramstein findings contradict claims made by both leaders at their last meeting in June 2013, when Obama dismissed reports that US bases in Germany had been used for drone attacks. He told journalists:

"We do not use Germany as a launching point for unmanned drones [...] as part of our counterterrorism activities. [...] I know that there have been some reports here in Germany that that might be the case. That is not."

During the same visit, Merkel spoke of Ramstein as filling "a very important function", saying "our work is based [...] on shared values."

Recent questions in the German parliament have increased pressure on Merkel to reveal the true extent of Germany's involvement in the strikes, but there is little evidence that the government plans to challenge the Obama administration over them.

Kat Craig, Legal Director at Reprise, said:

"One year on from Chancellor Merkel's assertions about shared US-German 'values', the extent of Washington's use of German soil to perpetrate illegal killings is clear. Despite Obama's promises to the German people last year, the number of civilian deaths from these secretive drone strikes is higher than ever, and the response of the German government has been to ignore the issue. It is high time that Merkel raised concerns with Obama about the launching of illegal drone strikes from Germany - concerns that are echoing loudly throughout her country."

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