



WORLD**BEYOND**WAR.org

Fact Sheet

## War is Immoral

***War is nothing other than murder on a large scale. Over the centuries and decades, death counts in wars have grown dramatically, shifted heavily onto civilians rather than combatants, and been overtaken by injury counts as even greater numbers have been injured but medicine has allowed them to survive. Deaths are now due primarily to violence rather than to disease, formerly the biggest killer in wars. Civilian fatalities in wartime have climbed from 5% at the turn of the 20th century to more than 90% in modern wars. Suicide is now the leading killer of U.S. troops.<sup>1</sup>***

***"War is organized murder and nothing else."  
- Harry Patch, the last surviving soldier of World War I.<sup>2</sup>***

### Deaths: War Kills People

- Over 17 million civilians were killed due to wars from 1945-2000.<sup>3</sup>
- 2.6+ million people have died in the U.S. "War on Terror" in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.<sup>4</sup>
- In the 1990s alone, 2 million children were killed in armed conflict; 6 million were injured or permanently disabled, and 12 million were left homeless.<sup>5</sup>
- The CIA drone program death count is estimated at 1500 as of 2017,<sup>6</sup> of which the CIA admits only 10% of those killed were the targets of assassination; the other 90% being "collateral damage."<sup>7</sup>



Photo Credit: AFP-Getty

## Losses of War

War	Casualties
World War II	Total - 50+ million Russia (“victor”) - 20 million; U.S. (“victor”) - 400,000+
Korean War	South Korea Military - 113,000 South Korea Civilian - 547,000 North Korea Military - 317,000 North Korea Civilian - 1,000,000 China - 460,000 U.S. Military - 33,000+
Vietnam War	South Vietnam Military - 224,000 North Vietnamese Military and Viet Cong - 1,000,000 South Vietnamese Civilians - 1,500,000 North Vietnamese Civilians - 65,000; U.S. Military 58,000+
Iraq (2003-2008)	“Excess” Iraqi Deaths - 1,455,590+ Iraqis Injured – 4,200,000+

*Excerpted from A Global Security System: An Alternative to War 2018-19 edition, pg. 25*

### Sanctions: Economic Warfare

War not only kills people with bombs and missiles. Economic sanctions are another insidious kind of warfare. These measures do not merely have adverse economic impacts on the countries under sanction. They kill people by denying them food and medicine and other essential commodities.

One of the most draconian examples of economic sanctions was imposed by the

United Nations upon Iraq after the first Gulf War in 1991. The United Nations subsequently estimated that the sanctions killed over 1 million Iraqis who died of disease and starvation, including half a million children;<sup>8</sup> a fact now linked to the infamous comment by then-U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, who said that the deaths were “worth it.”<sup>9</sup>

## Refugees: Displaced by War

The global number of refugees and displaced persons is growing dramatically as a result of war. As of 2014, there were 59 million refugees worldwide who had fled violent conflict and persecution. Over 50% of current refugees are children.<sup>10</sup>

## Landmines: Remnants of War

Since 1960, 110 million landmines have been laid in 70 different countries, killing an estimated 1 million people and injuring many millions more. Approximately half of these landmines remain unexploded decades after the conflicts have ended, until stumbled upon by civilians with devastating consequences. Currently, 70 people a day are killed or injured by landmines.<sup>11</sup>

Among the top ten countries impacted by landmines are Iran, Angola, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Cambodia, each



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with around 10 million unexploded landmines.<sup>12</sup>

In 1999, the majority of the countries of the world signed a treaty banning landmines and other victim-activated explosive devices placed on or under the ground. The United States, Russia and China are among the countries that have refused to sign the treaty.<sup>13</sup>

***Militarism is a major public health threat, a completely preventable epidemic that consists of the large-scale killing, wounding, orphaning, and traumatizing of people.***

**Learn More at:**  
[worldbeyondwar.org/immoral](http://worldbeyondwar.org/immoral)

*World BEYOND War is a global grassroots network of volunteers, activists, and allied organizations advocating for the abolition of war and its replacement with an alternative global security system based on peace and demilitarization. Visit [WorldBEYONDWar.org](http://WorldBEYONDWar.org) to join the global movement to end all wars.*

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## References

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<sup>2</sup> Sweetman, Mick. "From WWI to Gaza: War is organized murder." *Rabble*, 16 November 2012, <http://rabble.ca/news/2012/11/wwi-gaza-war-bloody-murder>.

<sup>3</sup> Leitenberg, Milton. "Death in Wars and Conflicts in the 20th Century." 3rd ed. *Cornell University Peace Studies Program*, 2006, [https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20060800\\_cdsp\\_occ\\_leitenberg.pdf](https://www.clingendael.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/20060800_cdsp_occ_leitenberg.pdf).

<sup>4</sup> Davies, Nicholas J. S. "How Many Millions of People Have Been Killed in America's Post-9/11 Wars? – Part One: Iraq." *Consortium News*, 22 March 2018, <https://consortiumnews.com/2018/03/22/how-many-millions-of-people-have-been-killed-in-americas-post-9-11-wars-part-one-iraq/>.

<sup>5</sup> "The State of the World's Children." *UNICEF*, 2001, <https://www.unicef.org/sowc/archive/ENGLISH/The%20State%20of%20the%20World%27s%20Children%202001.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> "Afghanistan: Reported U.S. Covert Actions 2017." *The Bureau Investigates*, 2017, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/drone-war/data/get-the-data-a-list-of-us-air-and-drone-strikes-afghanistan-2017>.

<sup>7</sup> Begley, Josh. "The Drone Papers: A Visual Glossary." *The Intercept*, 15 October 2015,

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<sup>8</sup> Shah, Anup. "Iraq-Post 1991 Persian Gulf War/Sanctions." *Global Issues*, 2 October 2005,

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<sup>9</sup> "Madeleine Albright - The deaths of 500,000 Iraqi children was worth it for Iraq's non existent WMD's." *YouTube*, uploaded by 91177info, 9 February 2011, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RM0uvvHKZe8>.

<sup>10</sup> Chenoweth, Erica, and Hakim Young. "Seeing Flight as a Non-violent Option: One Way to Change the Discourse about the World's 60 Million Refugees." *World BEYOND War*, <https://worldbeyondwar.org/seeing-flight-as-a-non-violent-option-one-way-to-change-the-discourse-about-the-worlds-60-million-refugees/>.

<sup>11</sup> "Facts About Landmines." *Care*, 16 October 2003, <http://www.care.org/emergencies/facts-about-landmines>.

<sup>12</sup> Rushfan. "10 Countries with the Most Landmines." *Listverse*, 11 August 2008, <https://listverse.com/2008/08/11/10-countries-with-the-most-landmines/>.

<sup>13</sup> Gladstone, Rick. "Land Mine Casualties Jump 75% as Funding for Their Removal Declines." *The New York Times*, 22 November 2016, <https://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/22/world/land-mine-casualties-annual-report.html>.