

Seven countries in Trump's travel ban are part of secret military operation hunting ISIS operatives

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The seven countries included in President Trump's executive order travel ban are also part of a secret U.S. military operation to hunt ISIS operatives abroad, according to a report.

Counterterrorism officials told [ABC News](#) on Monday the seven countries — Syria, Iraq, Iran, Sudan, Somalia, Libya and Yemen — are among at least 11 targeted by the Counter-External Operations Task Force, or “Ex-Ops.”

The task force, formed under former President Obama in late 2016, allows the Joint Special Operations Command to track ISIS fighters moving beyond the known war zones in Syria and Iraq.

The task force has the freedom to make military decisions on its own in parts of the world with weak or nonexistent governments, according to the [Washington Post](#).

The Joint Special Operations Command is the same organization that helped kill Osama bin Laden during a Navy SEALs raid in 2011.

Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Egypt are also reportedly part of the operation.

Those countries were not included in Trump's ban, even though nearly 3,000 Americans have been killed by citizens from there since 1975, according to Cato Institute statistics. Trump also holds multi-million dollar business deals in all four of those exempt countries.

All 11 countries in the operation are predominantly Muslim.

While defending his executive order — which led to chaos and protests at airports across America over the weekend — Trump compared his travel ban to President Obama's six-month suspension in 2011 of visas for Iraqi refugees.

But Obama didn't order a full travel ban in 2011. The State Department stopped processing refugees from Iraq for six months after two terrorists found living in Kentucky were arrested.

And Trump's ban extended to all travelers from those seven countries, including green card residents of the United States, whereas Obama only focused on refugees from one country.

Trump also noted that Obama identified his seven blacklisted countries as terror threats.

But Trump made no public mention of any continuation of Obama military actions in those countries.