

News. Controversy. Opinion.

OPPOSING VIEWS

Ron Paul Right? U.S. Acting as World's Police?

By David Boaz

Is the United States the world's policeman, as [Cato scholars](#) and presidential candidate [Ron Paul](#), among others, have often complained? A headline on the front page of *The Washington Post* today reads:

U.S. troops moving slowly against Kony

Are we then at war in central Africa? Not quite. We're just there to "assist regional militaries." But [the article](#) sure reads like a world-policeman report:

Behind razor wire and bamboo walls topped with security cameras sits one of the newest U.S. military outposts in Africa. U.S. Special Forces soldiers with tattooed forearms and sunglasses emerge daily in pickup trucks that carry weapons, supplies and interpreters — as well as the expectations of a vast region living in fear of a man and his brutal militia. "The Americans have captured Osama bin Laden and Saddam Hussein," said Bassiri Moke, a tribal chief. "Surely they can catch Joseph Kony."

In this far-flung nook of central Africa, the United States has assumed a small but vital role in one of Africa's most vexing military challenges: to capture Kony and dismantle his Lord's Resistance Army.

Might this be something that President Obama and Mitt Romney might debate over the next six months—whether the United States military should be pursuing criminals and warlords across the globe? Might the United States Senate, [which isn't doing anything else](#), hold a debate on whether the United States should be injecting its military forces into a conflict that spans several countries?