

Obama Use of 2001 AUMF Threatens Perpetual War

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WASHINGTON, October 7 (RIA Novosti) - The Barack Obama administration's rationale of using the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force (AUMF) to justify military actions against the Islamic State (IS) in Iraq and Syria threatens to change the character of US foreign engagement to perpetual warfare, the vice president of the Washington-based think tank Cato Institute, Gene Healy told RIA Novosti.

"The way, in which two successive administrations have stretched the post 9/11 AUMF, does threaten to permanently change the default setting of the [United States](#) from peace to war," Healy told RIA Novosti at a Tuesday debate on congressional authorization for war.

Asked whether he believed the [US](#) had adopted a strategy or doctrine of perpetual war, he argued that Obama's use of the 2001 AUMF to go to war against the Islamic State "is a complete pretense."

"[It's] being treated as a delegation in perpetuity to a succession of presidents to do, more or less, whatever they want that they think is in the name of national security. That's not how our system is supposed to work," Healey added.

Since Obama announced airstrikes against the Islamic State group in Iraq on August 8, there has not been a debate in Congress on whether participate in the [war](#). A number of members of Congress, including Representative Adam Schiff of California, Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia and others have called for a Congressional debate. Both House majority leader John Boehner and House minority leader Nancy Pelosi have stated publicly that they would recall Congress from recess for a special session to debate a war authorization.

Officials at the Pentagon have stated they anticipate the [operations against IS](#) and similar threats, lasting potentially another ten to twenty years. This, according to Healy, raises further doubt about the applicability of a use of force authorization that is already 13 years old. "If anything [this] should be publicly debated, it should be the most grave question we deal with as a society, in the question of war and peace," Healy emphasized.

Healy further noted that without Congressional authorization and a strong legal justification for current [military actions](#) in Iraq and Syria, the President could be in violation of the 1973 War Powers Act. Under the Act, the President has 60 days to receive authorization from Congress to engage in hostilities. If he fails to receive proper authorization, he has another 30 days to withdraw from military engagement. October 7 marks 60 days from the beginning of the air

campaign against IS. That 30 day period stipulated in the War Powers Act expires two days after the November 4 midterm elections.