

URGENT ACTION

END THE USE OF MILITARY TO POLICE PROTESTS

On 8 June, President Trump federalized 2000 US National Guard to deploy to the city of Los Angeles following two days of protests against heavy-handed, militarized immigration raids in Los Angeles County, California. This action came against the wishes of the California Governor who normally oversees these troops and in contravention to the law cited requiring Governor consent. An additional 2000 US national Guard were federalized and deployed on 9 June and approximately 700 US Marines are standing by in support. Call on authorities to rescind the memo authorizing this unilateral and potentially illegal action.

TAKE ACTION: WRITE AN APPEAL IN YOUR OWN WORDS OR USE THIS MODEL LETTER

Ms. Susan Wiles
Chief of Staff
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave,
N.W. Washington, D.C. 20500
Email: susan.s.wiles2@who.eop.gov

Dear Susie Wiles,

I am writing with deep concern regarding the federalization and deployment of at least 4000 California National Guard troops to Los Angeles County following protests against militarized immigration raids in their communities. An additional 700 US Marines are on "high alert" to deploy in support of those efforts.

The President's memo allowing these actions is legally troubling. It includes false claims about what's happening now and misuses the law to send the National Guard into action. It's also written so broadly that it could be used anywhere protests happen—especially when ICE or other federal agents carry out violent and aggressive raids on workplaces, courthouses, and immigrant neighborhoods. President Trump even said that more of these raids are coming nationwide and warned that any protests will be met with "equal or greater force," like what we are seeing right now in Los Angeles, and is already sending militarized ICE units to accompany the agents carrying out the raids.

A transparent and accountable government is the cornerstone of the rule of law. President Trump's arbitrary and unlawful actions in utilizing the military to suppress peaceful protests erodes that rule of law and the effective functioning of government essential to upholding and protecting human rights and abiding by U.S. law.

While the National Guard deployment has largely been providing protection to the federal building in downtown Los Angeles, they do not have the experience or training to engage in law enforcement activities or the policing of protests. As we saw during the nationwide protests in 2020, these situations can quickly escalate and lead to the violation of the human rights of protesters.

I am calling on you in your role as Chief of Staff to encourage the President to rescind the Presidential memo authorizing the deployment of national guard and other military assets. The military should have no role in law enforcement activities.

Yours sincerely,

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Protesters took to the streets to confront federal agents conducting widescale, militarized workplace immigration raids on 6 and 7 June 2025 in the cities of Los Angeles and Paramount, California. US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents responded to these protests aggressively, including by using rubber bullets and tear gas against peaceful protestors. Following the second night of protests when some protestors threw rocks and other projectiles at ICE agents, President Trump announced that he was federalizing 2000 US National Guard troops and sending them into the city to suppress the protests. It is the first time since 1965 that a president has activated a state's National Guard force without a request from that state's governor. At that time, the military was deployed to protect civil rights protestors; the Trump administration has deployed the military to *suppress* protestors. A group of 22 Democratic Governors issued a [statement](#) declaring President Trump's actions "an abuse of power" and unlawful under the federal law authorizing such deployments. On 9 June, California Governor Gavin Newsom and the state of California [sued](#) the Trump administration to block its use of Marines and the state's National Guard to enforce laws in the state, including by assisting federal officials with immigration enforcement.

Governors largely control the deployment of National Guard troops in their states. However, the [memo](#) issued by President Trump cites [10 U.S.C. 12406](#), which, in part allows the federal deployment of National Guard forces if "there is a rebellion or danger of a rebellion against the authority of the Government of the United States." It also states that the president may call into federal service "members and units of the National Guard of any State in such numbers as he considers necessary to repel the invasion, suppress the rebellion, or execute those laws." The incidents that have occurred fail to meet this threshold. Trump's directive states, "To the extent that protests or acts of violence directly inhibit the execution of the laws, they constitute a form of rebellion against the authority of the Government of the United States." Trump's directive authorized the Secretary of Defense to "employ any other members of the regular Armed Forces as necessary to augment and support the protection of Federal functions and property in any number determined appropriate in his discretion." On 9 June, following the fourth night of protests, the President ordered an additional 2000 California National Guard to deploy to the area and 700 US Marines were placed on "high alert" to be stationed near the Los Angeles to deploy if needed. The deployment of the Marines may risk violation of the Posse Comitatus Act, a federal law that generally prohibits the use of the military for domestic law enforcement purposes, with limited exceptions.

The memo is not location specific, authorizes protection of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations anywhere in the country where protests are occurring and pre-emptively authorizes the military to be deployed against anticipated, future protests. It says that troops can be sent to "locations where protest against functions are occurring, or are likely to occur based on current threat assessments and planned operations" regardless if there is any kind of violence. Importantly, in recent months, immigration raids have become increasingly militarized and led by masked immigration agents, often in unmarked uniforms and with unmarked vehicles, weapons, and acting without warrants. On 8 June, President Trump signalled that this was just the beginning of a much wider deployment, "We're gonna have troops everywhere," he said. Two days later, he stated that additional immigration raids will take place across the country and that any protests that occur will be met with "equal or greater force." There are also [nationwide protests](#) planned on 14 June 2025 in opposition to a [military parade](#) that is taking place in Washington DC on that day to commemorate the 250th anniversary of the US army, as well as the president's 79th birthday. On 10 June, Trump threatened anyone protesting the 14 June military parade, stating, "People that want to protest will be met with big force ... This is people that hate our country. They will be met with heavy force."

President Trump suggested deploying military forces in the same manner during his first term to suppress outbreaks of violence during the nationwide protests over the police murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. In 2020, [military helicopters were used to disperse peaceful protesters](#) demonstrating against police violence near the White House in Washington, DC. Amnesty International documented widespread violations in the use of force by federal law enforcement agents during the protests. Military forces are generally not suitable for carrying out law enforcement tasks and should not be deployed to conduct law enforcement duties unless under exceptional and temporary circumstances, based on a clear needs assessment as to their added value in a concrete situation. In such a deployment, they are bound by the legal framework applicable to law enforcement, including international and domestic human rights law, and may carry out law enforcement functions only if they are properly instructed, equipped and trained to do so in a lawful, human rights compliant manner. They should be subject to civilian command, control and oversight at all times. Amnesty International is concerned about the use of military personnel in any such circumstance unless their deployment is to serve such a specific legitimate objective. Military personnel do not have any experience, training or equipment in crowd control manoeuvres and the policing of protests.

PREFERRED LANGUAGE TO ADDRESS TARGET: English

You can also write in your own language.

PLEASE TAKE ACTION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE UNTIL: 12 September 2025

Please check with the Amnesty office in your country if you wish to send appeals after the deadline.

NAME AND PREFERRED PRONOUN: Protestors (various pronouns)

LINK TO PREVIOUS UA: N/A

ADDITIONAL TARGETS

His Excellency Mr Warren Stephens
Ambassador Extraordinary & Plenipotentiary
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020 7499 9000
Monday-Friday 0830-1730
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