

## **IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Amid the Atomwaffen Division's Expanding International Presence, the United States Government Should Consider Levying Sanctions**

*While the group has roots in the United States, it maintains links and affiliates in the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic States, making its reach and potential to influence and plan violence global in nature.*

## **LINK TO REPORT**

**(New York, NY – August 12, 2020)** A new report by The Soufan Center argues that the U.S. Government should devote serious consideration to sanctioning the Atomwaffen Division (AWD), as it meets the criteria to be labeled a terrorist group, since AWD maintains a foreign presence; its terrorist activity has constituted a threat to U.S. national security interests; and it has demonstrated an ability to commit terrorist attacks, which have been enabled or facilitated through its paramilitary training camps.

While AWD has roots in the United States, the group has an expanding international footprint, with established links and affiliates in the United Kingdom, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, and the Baltic States, making its reach and potential to influence and plan violence global in nature. Ukraine continues to be a critical node in the transnational white supremacy extremism network. Specifically, white supremacist organizations and individuals see the conflict in eastern Ukraine as a battlefield laboratory where they travel to gain actual combat experience — something many seek to bring back to their countries. The announcement of a potential AWD affiliate or inspired group in Ukraine presents a dangerous avenue for AWD members from around the world who wish to travel, train, and gain combat experience.

By sanctioning AWD, the hope is to mitigate the real and growing white supremacist threat and prevent the continued international growth of this network.

### **A growing global white supremacy challenge**

Similar to the so-called Islamic State, AWD has built a globally identifiable brand, which is capable of seducing violent white supremacists and aspiring neo-Nazis from around the globe, and spurring lone wolves to action by providing inspiration. AWD's ultimate goal is to accelerate societal collapse, promote chaos, and create a racially-pure white society. The group seeks to do this by committing violence against racial minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, leftist organizations, government institutions, law enforcement personnel, and infrastructure.

Since early 2017, The Soufan Center has documented the growth of a global network of white supremacist extremists that stretches across North America, Europe and Australia. The Soufan Center's September 2019 research paper '[White Supremacy Extremism: The Transnational Rise of the Violent White Supremacist Movement](#),' focused on a range of white supremacy extremist groups with global reach, including the Atomwaffen Division (AWD). In April 2020, the Soufan Center published new research, including analysis and recommendations, following the designation of [The Russian Imperial Movement](#) — the first white supremacist group ever sanctioned in the United States.

## **ABOUT THE SOUFAN CENTER (TSC)**

Based in New York, [The Soufan Center](#) is a non-partisan strategy center dedicated to increasing awareness of global security issues in the United States and around the world. Please contact **Stephanie Foggett** with any media inquiries or interview requests: [stephanie.foggett@thesoufancenter.org](mailto:stephanie.foggett@thesoufancenter.org).

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