

(Continued)

The Clinton administration later stated that one goal of the raid was to kill bin Laden and his lieutenants. Administration officials also argued that their targeting of bin Laden did not violate the long-standing ban on assassinations. Their view was based on an opinion written by National Security Council lawyers that the United States could legally target terrorist infrastructures and that bin Laden's main infrastructure was human.

After the September 2001 attacks, bin Laden and other terrorists were seen as legitimate combatant targets, as the United States was at war against them in self-defense, as described by Attorney General Eric Holder after bin Laden's death.