The issue of military presence in sovereign states

The socioeconomic and political consequences of stationing foreign military bases in sovereign states have been continuously seen worldwide. The British military has troops stationed in 145 overseas military bases, located across 42 countries. The United States, however, has a staggering 800 military bases in over 80 countries. U.S. taxpayers pay an annual average of $10,000 to £40,000 more to station a member of the military abroad than in the United States. Other powerful countries across the world have also maintained heavy military presence in many parts of the world, especially in former colonies, for example France, in various parts of Africa.

One prime example of military presence causing destabilisation of states is the War on Terror. The United States has stated that their aim is to protect international and national security through keeping military bases in certain countries in the Middle East. This is viable threat to the parameters set to measure the sovereignty and independence of the host state, for example, it is a means through which the US, in this case, has drastically influenced regional politics. There has also been a myriad of instance in which sanctions have been placed on economic goods and services, to alter the policies of other countries. Throughout the War on Terror, tens of millions of people have been displaced, resulting in a massive refugee crisis that has afflicted European countries. Economies have been bulldozed and whole states dismembered. Destabilising effects of these bases have also manifested in the forms of often violent protests and political unrest.

It is not clear that these bases keep global peace and increase the security of host nations. The presence of foreign bases can turn a country into a target for militants and foreign powers, counterproductive to the supposed aim of holding so many foreign military bases. They discourage diplomatic solutions and heighten military tensions. Holding bases in foreign countries often leads to the host countries increasing their own military spending exponentially.

Most noticeably, the thirteen days the world held its breath during the Cold War was simply due to the of the construction of Soviet Nuclear Missile Factories in Cuba, ninety miles from the coast of Florida. Therefore, this issue is of upmost importance, as one wrong move has proven to result in the world reaching the very brink of nuclear warfare.
Our goal for this issue is to reach a unified strategy to improve problems that stem from having such bases in foreign countries.

Could we therefore see a move to "over the horizon capabilities" which could decrease the in person military presence in countries while still maintaining the strategic advantages provided and reduce the political interference within areas near military bases.

Points to consider
- What is the relevance of foreign military bases in sovereign states in the context of today's world?
- What measures can we take to decrease the destabilising effect of these bases?
- Can we include certain guidelines within Status of Force Agreements (SOFA) between nations to prevent destabilising effects on host countries?

- Are over the horizon capabilities a preferable alternative to military bases?
- Can over the horizon capabilities provide a better service than traditional military bases?

Useful links
- The World Factbook - The World Factbook (https://www.cia.gov/)
- Disarmament and International Security Committee - MUNUC
- North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Status of Forces Agreement: identification of status - https://www.gov.uk/
- https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/08/31/remarks-by-president-biden-on-the-end-of-the-war-in-afghanistan/