

Chapter 10 – RADICALISATION AND DERADICALISATION: DUTCH EXPERIENCES

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10.1 INTRODUCTION

Since 9/11 the Netherlands has experienced a number of traumatic terrorist incidents that shocked and polarised society. The incidents triggered a wave of investigations and studies by journalists, academics, government, NGOs and think tanks which has resulted in an extensive body of knowledge on radicalisation leading to terrorism. In 2003 the Dutch government reformed its counterterrorism structure which resulted in the appointment of a National Coordinator for Counterterrorism tasked with the coordination of Dutch CT-policy. The Hofstad-group was a group emerging from the Moroccan community in the Netherlands and engaged in terrorist activities. Members were arrested and convicted to long prison sentences. While the current terrorist threat is still significant (one level below critical) the threat has gradually shifted from home-grown groups to the danger of groups that may come from abroad. Salafist jihadi groups are likely to use the provocative video “Fitna” produced by Minister of Parliament (MP) Geert Wilders to justify attacks directed against Dutch interests. Partly as a result of an extensive awareness campaign the popular concern about terrorism has diminished and the feeling of security among the general public has improved. In general Dutch society remains peaceful with a far lower level of political violence than other European countries. Over the last three years there have been no terrorist incidents with a Salafist jihadi background and in 2008 only four suspects were arrested.

Two assassinations of public figures said to be critical of Islam, one a politician that occurred in 2002 and the other a journalist and film director that occurred in 2004, led to a situation that has been described by commentators as a “pressure cooker”. Since then the pressure has gone down but it is still significant. Over the last few years Dutch authorities have been specifically focused on the reduction of tensions in society and improving relationships between groups with different ethnic backgrounds. This is consistent with the view of the government that counterterrorism policy is much broader than just law enforcement. This approach is based on lessons learned from a short terror campaign involving the Moluccan community in the late 1970s. At that time, the Dutch authorities also chose to use psychological and socio-economic approaches to reduce tensions and improve the situation of the Moluccan community in order to reduce their motivation for violence.

A third assassination in 2005 received far less international media coverage. The victim was an activist who ran an investigative unit doing research on the behaviour of the Dutch police and intelligence services. The case was solved when the perpetrator was traced in Spain and arrested. It turned out that he had a personal grudge against the victim due to the fact that he was expelled from an activist group in the 1980s after being suspected of being a police informer. Personal problems also contributed to his motivation for revenge.

In October 2007, Bilal Bajaka, a young Dutch Muslim from Moroccan descent, entered a police station in Amsterdam, pulled a knife and stabbed two police officers. In self-defence, one of the officers shot the man, who died on the spot. It turned out that Bajaka was a suicidal schizophrenic who had just left a psychiatric clinic where he had been treated for mental problems. The incident triggered riots among young Muslims in immigrant neighborhoods in Amsterdam and fuelled tensions between Muslims and non-Muslim communities in the Netherlands.

The most lethal incident in the Netherlands since 9/11 occurred during the Queen's Birthday celebration (April 30, 2009) when a desperate man crashed his car through a watching crowd in an attempt to hit an open bus with the complete royal family. A total of eight people died including the perpetrator. Sixteen others were injured. Several investigations are still ongoing. So far there are no indications that he had a political motive. The incident will have far reaching consequences for security measures during future large scale public events involving royalty or other important public figures.

The last three incidents illustrate how incidents unrelated to radicalisation or terrorism but rather resulting from personal problems, can trigger intense public debate, fuel tensions between different communities and lead to other types of violence. In the same vein, this paper will "paint the picture" of the various contextual factors, issues, events, personalities and policies that are important for understanding how people move through radicalisation as well as the holistic approach that the Netherlands is employing to deal with terrorism.

10.2 PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The increased tensions from the assassinations and a series of terrorist threats forced the government to initiate a public awareness campaign. It took quite some time before the decision was made as the government wasn't sure such a campaign would be effective. After opinion polls and discussions in focus groups, it finally agreed to organize a campaign under specific conditions. It did not want to have a one-off information campaign without any follow-up; thus, it decided on a three year campaign with a certain dynamic that should be evaluated. The results were to be used as a basis for refining the information strategy. The government also decided to focus and tailor the campaign for specific groups (e.g., youths) with message(s) will be translated for specific audiences and will be communicated via different channels. The campaign costs were 4.8 million euro over a period of three years. A special website was established: <http://www.nederlandtegenterrorisme.nl>. The first stage of the campaign focused on newspaper advertisements, radio commercials and house-to-house pamphlets. In the second stage, the campaign was deepened by focussing on specific partner groups and a special focus on youths. In the third and last stage new television and radio commercials are focused on the results and the development of the campaign. In this stage new strategic choices will also be debated.

Partly due to this campaign, the fear of terrorism has diminished (from a peak in 2005 when the Dutch population had the highest ratings in Europe) and the general public in the Netherlands feeling of security has improved. Thirteen percent of the population still fears a terrorist attack in the Netherlands. In 2008, 35 percent of the population felt secure everywhere in the Netherlands. This was a five percent improvement from 2007. While overall fear levels have diminished, the Dutch are still second highest in Europe, after the Spanish in terms of feelings regarding fear of terrorism [1]. However, in general people are currently more concerned about economic developments than about terrorism.

People also are starting to think in a more nuanced way about the origin of terrorism and the consequences of radicalisation in the Netherlands. The majority of the survey respondents think that terrorists are not born as terrorists and radicalisation is not a unique characteristic of Islamist groups. The number of people concerned about radicalisation has decreased from 21 to 8 percent of the population, with estimates of radicalization in the Netherlands lower than in previous years. There is a general feeling that the terrorist threat is fueled from abroad.

10.3 GUIDELINES FOR COUNTERTERRORISM

The launching of the public awareness campaign coincided with a symposium attended by local administrative authorities in 2006. Speakers from the city of London were invited to inform the Dutch authorities about the handling of the metro and bus bombings in July 2005. The threat in the Netherlands

has convinced the government that counterterrorism policy warrants a broader approach than the traditional law enforcement approach. In an attempt to improve the integration of immigrants and provide a future perspective for an alienated and frustrated 2nd and 3rd generation, existing policies have to be adapted. New ways of cooperation have to be developed involving cooperation and coordination of new organizations on different administrative levels.

Traditionally, disaster management in the Netherlands is handled bottom-up. The scale of the disaster determines whether it should be handled on a higher (provincial) or even a national level. This approach does not work very well for terrorism. Depending on the type of terrorist attack (e.g., cross-border incidents) there should be immediate coordination at the national level. Also the triggering of agencies to take action, depending on an evolving scenario, can be better managed using a top-down approach. Effective public relation strategies should be ready for execution when a situation occurs.

The Dutch government decided to focus its policies on the prevention of further radicalisation of Muslim youths and the abolishment of so-called 'hot spots' of radicalization including the development of new ways to communicate between Muslims and non-Muslims and the involvement of people on different administrative levels. This approach has been working, as in its latest threat assessment the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism concluded that the four hotspots previously identified as hot spots are longer considered as such.

The majority of the Dutch Muslims live in the four major big cities (Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague). These cities are currently involved in implementing various initiatives to not only improve the relationships between the various population groups but also to deal with the social and economic problems related to specific groups. Some cities have been better than others in countering segregation. This has impacted the outcome of recent municipal elections.

The Dutch government identified 40 large cities with districts that were problematic. These districts were classified as "backward" from a socio-economic point of view and were based on a variety of criteria. This backward socio-economic situation creates a breeding ground that may contribute to future radicalisation. The assumption is that, by improving the living conditions in these city districts, radicalisation can be prevented. The local authorities decide on their own what kind of projects they will support depending on local circumstances and budgets which face severe challenges in some cases.

10.4 SHIFT IN VOTING DURING 2006 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

A growing dissatisfaction of the general public with the national government has built up over the years and has affected the outcome of recent elections. The outcomes of the March 2006 municipal elections were viewed as a score card for the national government. The non-indigenous population did vote and showed a high voter turnout. This was promising as some radical Muslim clerics have argued that faithful Muslims should not participate in democratic elections. This is seen as a threat because of fears it may result in a parallel society.

The outcomes of the 2006 municipal elections were interpreted as a rejection of the national government. There were big losses for the parties of the governing coalition. The non-indigenous population voted massively (80%) for the left-wing Labour Party (Party van de Arbeid). Many votes of the non-indigenous voters went to non-indigenous candidates. In 39 cities, left-wing parties won an absolute majority. Despite these majorities, the PvdA formed coalitions with the Christian Democrats in many city councils. Commentators pointed at a danger of an ethnic division along party lines.

New parties for the non-indigenous population have been established that will participate in the next parliamentary elections. Some of them hope to gain a significant number of seats in parliament. One party, the Party for non-indigenous Dutch (PAN), includes in its party programme: the abolishment of the

obligatory integration course, the establishment of a Ministry for Cultural Development, the introduction of school uniforms, a general pardon for asylum seekers who have already lived at least than five years in the Netherlands and the integration of Turkey in the EU.

Many right-wing parties who did very well during the previous election were essentially punished in the election for their polarising policies during the past years. Many voters were fed up with this polarisation and were looking for a more democratic future focused on consensus. They expected better social conditions by voting for the left-wing parties.

Since the assassinations of Pim Fortuyn and Theo van Gogh, many observers and commentators have spoken about a so-called gap between the government and the people. During the election campaign politicians developed new ways to reach out to the people in an attempt to improve their political involvement. The gap still exists and the Party of Freedom (PVV) of PM Geert Wilders and the Proud on the Netherlands (TON)-movement of Rita Verdonk have tried to exploit the undercurrent of popular frustration about national politics. Geert Wilders, in particular, has been able to organize a new party focused on appealing to the right-wing of the political spectrum that has not fallen apart due to internal struggles and personal egos. Opinion polls indicate support for his party is increasing and it is seen as a threat to the governing coalition. The established political parties have difficulty in handling Mr. Wilders' provocative way of making politics.

The shift in voting was most clear for the ten major big cities in the Netherlands and had consequences for coalition formation. There are substantial differences in the political climates in these big cities. This climate was very dependent on the polemics between the cultural approach of the integration problem and the social economic approach. Each city has its own accents in this debate.

10.5 QUARTERLY THREAT ASSESSMENT

One of the outcomes of improved cooperation in the field of counterterrorism is the production of a national quarterly threat assessment. The assessments are based on the integration of contributions from the various intelligence agencies and the police based on relevant information concerning terrorism and radicalisation. On the basis of these contributions, the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism formulates a comprehensive national assessment. An unclassified version is presented to the parliament.

Some of the highlights from the latest assessment are the following. The international jihadi threat is still one of the main components of the terrorist threat against the Netherlands and Dutch interests abroad. Due to its military involvement in Afghanistan and alleged insults to Islam, the Netherlands and its interests are considered priority targets. The main theaters of the global jihad are the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area, Northern Africa, Yemen, Iraq and Somalia. In these regions organisations are active that support the global jihad. They are seen as a threat to Western, including Dutch interests. As the American surge in Afghanistan is building, a new peak of violence is expected in Afghanistan during the summer. This may result in increased levels of anxiety and retaliatory attacks against coalition partners, including the Netherlands. The probability of a jihadi attack against Dutch interests is the highest outside of the country, particularly in regions where international jihadi organisations have built up terrorist infrastructures and may exploit local circumstances. On several occasions the Netherlands has been explicitly mentioned in threat videos and audio messages by jihadi organisations.

The local Dutch jihadi networks have kept quiet for some time and activities are largely focused on situations abroad. During the last reporting period no travel movements of Dutch jihadis to training camps abroad have been observed. Two Dutch jihadis remain in the Pakistan-Afghanistan border area. It is assumed that the presence of Dutch jihadis in foreign training camps or theatres of the global jihad may result in strategic or tactical coordination of attacks in the Netherlands. This may also be true for nationals of other Schengen-countries.

The presence of Salafis in the Netherlands is increasingly a topic of scientific research including efforts to try to clarify how Salafi Muslims experience and practice their religion. Preliminary results indicate that it is important to differentiate Salafi Muslims from Muslims in general. In addition results indicate that, apart from the group of intolerant “purists”, there are many believers who are willing to adapt their religion to the daily life in a Western society [2].

10.6 SENTENCING OF THE HOFSTAD GROUP

The Hofstad group was seen as a local Islamist terrorist organization comprised of nine persons, including Mohammed Bouyeri, Jason Theodore James Walters, Ismail Akhnikh, Mohammed Fahmi Boughabe, Nouredine el Fathni, Youssouf Ettoumi, Ahmed Hamdi, Zine Labine Aouraghe and Mohammed el Morabit. The name ‘Hofstad’ was a codename used by the Dutch domestic intelligence service (AIVD) as it started monitoring the group. Hofstad is the popular name for the city of The Hague, where some of the members had been active. The group was influenced by the takfiri ideology. Key member Mohammed Bouyeri was responsible for the murder of the Dutch writer and filmmaker Theo van Gogh in November 2004. Bouyeri was convicted in July 2005 for planning and carrying out the attack. Thirteen other suspects were taken into custody on various charges in connection with the murder. Nine of the total fourteen suspects were convicted for membership of a terrorist organisation and are currently serving various sentences from one year to life imprisonment [3].

As a result of the introduction of new anti-terrorism legislation the trial ended for the first time in a conviction. Although the general prosecutor was satisfied with the outcome, seven cases will be appealed. The prosecutor is seeking further clarification on a number of issues, including a clarification of the concept of a terrorist organisation and more clarity on the distinction between the separate support activities and the terrorist purpose of the possession of weapons.

The changes in penal law were the following:

- Participation in an organization with a terrorist goal will become punishable.
- The concept of participation was made more explicit and now includes financial and other forms of material support.
- Preparation of severe crimes will become punishable, including the financing of terrorism.
- Recruitment for the jihad will become punishable.
- Conspiracy will become punishable as a terrorist crime.
- The preaching of hate and incitement to violence will become punishable [4].

The judges indicated which evidence was convincing and legal. They also clarified that the freedom of religion and the freedom of expression are restricted at the moment that a violent act begins. The judges decided on a differentiated approach. Not everyone in the group received the same punishment. The judges decided that the Hofstad group was a criminal organisation with a terrorist purpose.

Jason Walters was sentenced for attempted murder but not for murder with a terrorist purpose. According to the judges he didn’t throw hand grenades to instil fear. Some commentators have criticised this ruling. Nouredine el Fahtni was deemed to be in possession of a weapon but the judge was not convinced that it had a terrorist purpose. Some commentators have questioned how this can be reconciled with the ruling that he was a member of a criminal organisation with a terrorist purpose.

Some observers did not agree with Mohammed Fahmi Boughabe’s sentence for possessing radical documentation. In fact these were Koran and Hadith texts. The sentence could be interpreted as an infringement on the right to freedom of expression. Members of parliament will investigate how the

current law can be adapted in order to prevent situations in which possession of ordinary religious texts could end in convictions.

In a recent assessment of Dutch anti-terrorism legislation researchers pointed at several ethical bottlenecks in the Dutch approach. Dutch counter-terrorism policy exhibits a proactive approach to combat terrorism from its inception, in addition to its perpetration. Judicial, legislative, law enforcement and intelligence reforms have been introduced in order to better tackle the threat of terrorism. Measures are no longer reactive by nature as they used to be in the past. Pre-emption and anticipation of terrorism is in evidence when analysing the newly introduced counterterrorist legislation. According to the researchers pre-emption and anticipation are an ethical bottleneck because they limit civil liberties, whether through legislation or police action. The pro-active character of Dutch measures allows for an a priori limitation of civil liberties and the manner in which these liberties can be taken away is not clear. Another trend is the lack of fair trials for those individuals who are detained on terrorism charges. Individuals have little recourse to defend themselves.

The case of the Hofstad group received a lot of international attention. As an autonomously operating network of Muslim immigrants, the Hofstad group was an example of a relatively new development, which other countries were afraid could also occur on their territory. An analysis of this Dutch example was believed to be essential to improving counterterrorism policies in other countries.

A number of persons with close ties to the convicted members of the Hofstad group network have not been convicted or were never arrested. Some of them are still under surveillance by Dutch authorities. As the most recent national threat assessment indicates they have kept quiet and focus on activities outside the Netherlands.

10.7 OBLIGATORY INTEGRATION COURSE

Currently restrictive migration and asylum policies introduced by the government are being implemented. The policies created new obstacles for migrants to enter the country. The new policies try to provide the migrants with a better idea of what it means to become part of Dutch society. Following the policies of several other countries, the government introduced an obligatory naturalisation ceremony. The government declared the 24th of August as 'naturalisation day'. The developments in the Netherlands are closely watched by other European countries. Some of them have already indicated that they want to introduce similar programs. One positive spin-off is the creation of new jobs in Morocco and Turkey. In these countries, new enterprises have emerged that help people prepare for the obligatory examination in order to increase their chances of passing the test.

10.8 ASYLUM FIGURES AND POPULATION PROJECTIONS FOR THE NETHERLANDS

Asylum requests gradually increased since the mid-1970s. In the second half of the 1980s and the early 1990s the figures increased exponentially and reached a peak in 1994 with a total of more than 50,000 requests. Since 2000 the number of requests decreased to about 10,000 requests, partially due to a more restrictive policy. New requests are highly dependent on wars elsewhere in the world and differences in national asylum legislation. Asylum seekers know about loopholes and find out about countries with the least restrictive policies.

According to the latest population projections the percentage of the non-indigenous population will rise in the coming years from 19 percent (3.1 million) to 30 percent (5 million) in 2050. The overall population will only slightly increase (with 800.000) to a peak of 17 million in 2050. Thereafter the population of the Netherlands is expected to decrease. The demographic changes will cause a number of social and

economic problems. The proportion of the elderly will significantly increase in the coming years, from 14 percent to a peak of 25 percent in 2040. Predictions indicate shortages on the labour market which will result in a demand for a more focused immigration policy. In the past decade the number of Dutch with a double nationality has more than doubled from 400.000 to 900.000. The previous government wanted to abolish the possibility of having two nationalities. The State Council, however, suggested that this is a bad idea and has asked for support for the idea that citizens can have more than one identity.

10.9 ILLEGAL ENTRY AND PERMISSION FOR MIGRATORY LABOUR

The estimates of the number of illegals in the Netherlands vary from 46,000 to 225,000; however, if the East and South Europeans are not included, the estimate is 125,000. Most illegal immigrants in the Netherlands came from Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia. More restrictive entry policies usually result in increased number of illegals. Economists state that the presence of more people always results in more economic activity. They consider finding replacement workers as a temporary problem. In their view, more legal migration will result in less illegal jobs. Some experts say that closing the borders in Europe disturbs the self-regulating mechanism of emigration, allowing for high levels of exploitation as well as increasing numbers of people imprisoned.

Some say the Netherlands has the worst thinkable situation: closed borders and increasing pressure by a globalising economy. In 2006, the government decided to open the borders to admit workers from Eastern Europe. This was part of a larger trend as already one million East Europeans have been allowed into the European Union. The Netherlands handed out 30,000 work permits. Opening the borders is expected to increase that number to 70,000. This decision can have important consequences for specific economic sectors, e.g., transport. The current economic crisis is reducing employment opportunities and has forced many East Europeans back to their home countries.

10.10 CONCENTRATION OF THE NON-INDIGENOUS POPULATION IN THE MAJOR CITIES

The non-Western non-indigenous population in the Netherlands comprises little more than ten percent of the total population. The migrants are mainly concentrated in the four major big cities of Amsterdam, Rotterdam, Utrecht and The Hague. Although there are variations among the cities, a disturbing trend is that the level of segregation is increasing. This is a major issue that city administrations are trying to counter with some more successful than others. Rotterdam succeeded in reducing the level of segregation, while segregation levels for Turks and Moroccans in both Amsterdam and Utrecht increased. People from Surinam and the Dutch Antilles tend to be less segregated than Turkish and Moroccan people.

Another disturbing trend has been coined the ‘white flight’ from the big cities. The indigenous population is moving away and being replaced by non-indigenous people. High percentages live on or below the poverty standard (Moroccans: 46 percent, Antillians: 43 percent, Turkish: 38 percent, Surinam: 36 percent). The big cities focus attention on the youths of the non-Western non-indigenous population groups to try to reduce social problems. City councils try to improve the indicators for social problems including: school drop-out rates, rates of youths without beginner’s qualifications, poverty rates, rates of dependence on social security, segregation rates, and crime rates.

10.11 MUSLIMS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Compared to other countries in Europe the Netherlands has the highest concentration of Muslims (5 percent) after France (8 – 9 percent). By taking a closer look at the map of the Netherlands we see that the strongest concentrations of the 857,000 Muslims are in the Western and Southern part of the country, especially in the big cities Amsterdam, The Hague, Utrecht and Rotterdam.

The largest groups originate from Turkey (328.000) and Morocco (296.000). Other major groups come from Iraq (42.000), Afghanistan (36.000), Surinam (32.000), Iran (28.000) and Somalia (25.000). Surinam was a former colony of the Netherlands. Many people from Surinam decided to come to the Netherlands after their country became independent. The other four countries are theaters of the global jihad and have experienced prolonged periods of armed conflict causing population displacement and refugees.

According to the Dutch Minister of Integration, between 20,000 and 30,000 of them are potentially attracted to Salafi ideologies, and yet another 2,500 might be susceptible to violent radicalisation. The latter figure represents only a mere 0.3 percent of the total Muslim population in the Netherlands [5].

Tinka Veldhuis and Edwin Bakker described the potentially violent tensions and conflicts in which Muslims were involved, both within and between social groups, and the underlying mechanisms that are responsible for causing inter-group conflicts. They focused on three different categories of events: Muslims 'attacking' non-Muslims, non-Muslims 'attacking' Muslims and confrontations between or within Muslim communities.

The authors describe the activities of a number of radical Muslim organisations that have a presence in the Netherlands, including the al-Jama'a al-Islamiya (AJAI), Arab European League (AEL), Group Islamique Armé (GIA), Hamas/al-Aqsa Foundation, Hizb-al-Tahrir, Hofstad group, the Islami Büyükdoğu Akincilar Cephesi (IBDA-C), Milli Görüş, the Piranha group / Samir Azzouz and the Teblig movement (Islami Cemiyet ve Cemaatlar Birliği).

The fact that the release of the anti-Islam movie 'Fitna' did not lead to angry responses by Muslim communities may indicate two things in the view of Veldhuis and Bakker. Either the idea of intolerance and polarisation has been exaggerated, or Dutch society has gradually rediscovered its traditions and the importance of adhering to common rules and values and showing a minimum level of respect and understanding.

10.12 AFRICANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

There is a large population of Africans in the Netherlands. Some came as migrants others as refugees or asylum seekers. Their integration in the Dutch labor market is not very good. Unemployment is high and many work below their educational skills. The Netherlands have a number of well-known universities and schools that attract students from Africa. The distribution of these communities throughout the Netherlands is quite different. The Angolese, Congolese and Sudanese are more widely distributed throughout the country; whereas the Ethiopians/Eritreans and Nigerians are mainly concentrated in the four big cities. Due to better economic opportunities, large numbers of the Somalis moved to the UK during the past few years. In general, non-asylum groups (Ghanese, Nigerians) are much better integrated than the asylum groups (Sudanese, Somali). The speed of the integration process is very much dependent on the motivation for migration. War and refugee trauma may hinder employment possibilities. Most Africans immigrants in the Netherlands have a stronger sense of community than is common in the indigenous population. The Somali community shows a higher level of organisation which is possibly related to their clan structure. Nonetheless, many Africans in the Netherlands tend to feel quite lonely. Male Somali, Congolese and Angolese youths in the 10 – 25 years age category exhibit higher crime rates than other groups. This may be related to the lack of norms in their home country due to the perennial existence of armed conflict.

10.13 MOLUCCAN AND OTHER COMMUNITIES

The real question after viewing the data on immigration and asylum is what this means in terms of a terrorist threat. The Netherlands had its first experiences in the 1970s with a problematic immigrant

community that resulted in episodes of terrorism [6]. At that time the perpetrators were the second generation South Moluccans. Their parents were given the choice in the 1950s to come to the Netherlands after refusing to become part of the new independent Indonesian republic. They lived for a long time in poor housing conditions and were not very well integrated into Dutch society. The anger about their situation resulted in several terrorist attacks, including the occupation and hostage taking of a school and the hijacking of a train. This was the first time the Dutch government had had to decide about the deployment of military force to end the hostage taking of passengers in a train and had a traumatic impact on society. These experiences with terrorism within their borders resulted in an extensive government program to improve the situation of the Moluccan community. This turned out to be an effective approach as no more serious violence occurred, although there a latent wish still exists for an independent Moluccan republic. The annual Moluccan demonstration in The Hague sometimes ends in limited clashes with the police; however, since the late 1970s no new terrorist attacks by Moluccans have been recorded. The lessons learned from this period are currently applied in dealing with the second and third generation of Moroccans. Government policies are implemented based on the assumption that social-economic and psychological approaches will reduce the motivation to engage in violence.

10.14 MOROCCAN COMMUNITY

The Moroccan community is currently considered to be the most problematic. Many Moroccans came to the Netherlands in the 1960s and 1970s when there was a big labor shortage. They came as migrant workers and many believed that it would be a temporary affair and that they would return to their home country. However, many decided to stay in the Netherlands and brought their families over. It is the second and a third generation that is now responsible for many of the current crime and violence problems being experienced currently.

Many youths reject their parents and Dutch society which, in their view, does not offer them a future. They have developed a kind of 'counter culture'. In trying to develop a new kind of identity some of them came into contact with radical jihadist ideology which provides them with readymade answers for their problems. Contact with this ideology is facilitated by the Internet and other means of modern communication technology. Through web-pages and chat-rooms they develop their own ideology that justifies violence and motivates them to engage in terrorist acts. The process of becoming radicalized to the point of engaging in collective violence can commence with self-recruitment; however, more and more research indicates that group dynamics and the role of so-called "spiritual guides" play decisive roles. Several radical networks have emerged with a multi-ethnic character in which Moroccans play a dominant role. Further radicalisation could cause one or more of these networks to engage in violent activities.

Veldhuis and Bakker described the radicalisation process as follows: "radicalisation is a gradual process that has no strictly specified beginning or end. It is a twofold process including a shift in thinking towards fundamentalism and a heightened readiness to act on behalf of a cause. Secondly, its gradual nature indicates that in most cases, the direct causes or triggers of radicalisation are unclear and can even be unknown to the radicalising person. Rather, radicalisation is the product of a combination of causal factors that interact and that is unique for every individual. People are drawn to radical movements or ideologies for different reasons, of which some are more conscious than others. Whereas some are primarily inspired by ideological or political motivations, others might simply be attracted by action and adventure or seek group membership to obtain a positive identity. Even more so, radicalisation can occur beyond the consciousness of the relevant person, who might not be aware that he or she is in a process of radicalisation." [7]

The European Commission's Expert Group on Violent Radicalisation also emphasized in its final report the diverse paths of radicalisation. "What follows from the understanding that terrorist groups may consist of different types of individuals who undergo diverse paths of radicalisation is not that it is futile to develop strategies of prevention to target all these diverse types but rather that it is necessary to develop

several specific measures which may fit each separate type of dimension and to be prepared to adapt to changes. Some of these types are affected by social and economic interventions, others by psycho-social factors and by ideological and political issues. Thus, preventive strategies have to be tailored to the specific drivers behind each main type of activist and the specifics of the various groups.” [8]

10.15 EXPANDED DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

Due to European pressure the official Dutch definition of terrorism has been expanded in recent years. Traditionally a distinction was made between terrorism and what was called politically motivated activism. As the Netherlands for a long time had no home-grown terrorist movements the authorities did not want to see activists who used a certain degree of violence immediately labelled as terrorists. The majority of Dutch activists stuck to the unspoken rule that no violence against persons would be used during their activities. There are, however, a number of cases where their activities could have ended in fatalities. The assumption in the 1970s and 1980s was that calling activists “terrorists” would drive them underground. Due to international pressure it is no longer possible to maintain the distinction. For a long time animal activism in the Netherlands was not called terrorism, as it is in some other European countries where activists are willing to cross the threshold of personal violence. As the activities of Dutch animal activists have become more violent, political pressure has been building to treat them as terrorists. The Dutch domestic intelligence agency was forced to spend more energy on the issue and to increase its investigative efforts.

10.16 RECENT TERRORIST INCIDENTS INVOLVING DUTCH

Those who consult the MIPT terrorism knowledge database will find very few terrorist incidents in the Netherlands. Dutch people have a higher chance of getting involved in terrorism when they are abroad. The Dutch like to travel and are very active abroad in all kind of activities including NGO work. As Salfist jihadi terror organisations no longer consider relief organisations as neutral actors in the situation of armed conflict, relief workers have increasingly become targets of terrorism. In a rising number of occasions Dutch citizens were targeted. Arjan Arkel worked for the NGO Doctors without Borders in Chechnya. He was kidnapped and held hostage for over a year. In the end a ransom was paid after which he was released. A Dutch speed-skating coach who had contacts in Moscow finally succeeded in speeding up the negotiations. Another Dutchman joined an international tourist group which traveled through the desert in northern Africa. The group was kidnapped and held hostage by the Algerian Salfist Group for Predication and Call (GSPC). Due to successful mediation by the son of Moammar Gaddafi, the German government paid a ransom after which the group was released. Currently the successor of the GSPC, the AQIM is holding another group of European tourists hostage. They have threatened to kill a British citizen if the British government does not release from prison the radical cleric Abu Qatada al-Falastini. Over the years jihadi organisations have discovered that the kidnapping of foreigners can be a profitable tactic and may help to finance their operations. Several jihadi organisation have introduced this tactic, causing a rise in kidnappings of foreigners.

The first big shock after 9/11 for Dutch society was the assassination of politician Pim Fortuyn, just a few days before parliamentary elections in 2003 in which it is likely he would have become the leader of the party which won by a large margin. He was killed by a left-wing environmentalist. If it would have been a Muslim migrant, it could have caused a severe violent backlash against the Muslim community. The assassination was a big shock because many believed that this kind of violence was not possible in the Netherlands. For many people, Fortuyn was the personification of a new strong leader who would introduce new groundbreaking changes. Many people still believe that his death prevented important political change. Although his party won a significant victory in the elections, it fell apart quickly due to internal disputes.

10.16.1 Assassination of Theo van Gogh

Pim Fortuyn was one of the persons who put many important issues on the political agenda, resulting in heated debates about dealing with the social and economic problems related to the presence of the non-Western non-indigenous population groups. Ayaan Hirsi Ali, a Somali refugee who studied political science in the Netherlands, became a member of parliament. She became the spokeswoman for the emancipation of Muslim women. In order to put this topic on the political agenda she decided to make a short movie. Film director Theo van Gogh was asked to produce the short ten minute movie. They decided on a movie with a certain shock value. When it was broadcast, it led to angry reactions by Muslims. The anger over the film, in part, triggered the assassination of Theo van Gogh by Mohammed Bouyeri, a Dutchman of Moroccan origin who was thought to be well-integrated. Ayaan Hirsi Ali became an international celebrity and her movie and books have garnered many prizes. She has become a scapegoat for many radical Muslims who want to take revenge on her. Since the death of Theo van Gogh she has been under 24/7 protection and can no longer move around in the country without bodyguards. She had plans to produce a second edition of the movie. As a result of the commotion related to the Mohammed cartoons in Denmark, she postponed her plans and has focused on writing books which have been translated in many languages and sold very well.

Since the murder of Theo van Gogh there has been a lot of debate on whether the killing was an indication of a new trend. The question was posed as to whether radical Muslims would focus their attention on public figures that do play a role in public debates about immigration/asylum and integration issues. The tactic fits strategy papers of Islamist organisations that assume that by targeted killings of public figures, societies can be destabilised. This destabilisation would be the first phase of a struggle that has three stages. These strategy papers also suggest how targeted killings can be executed most effectively. It is not known if Mohammed Bouyeri read these suggestions, but the way he executed the murder of van Gogh was done in a very calm and controlled way. He left a last will stuck with a knife on the dead body and walked away in the direction of a park. He had expected to be killed by the police. He was shot in the leg and survived. From prison he succeeded in writing a paper that has been smuggled to friends who have placed it on the Internet. The text may inspire others to execute new attacks.

10.17 NEW PHASE OF THE GLOBAL JIHAD IN EUROPE

According to the French historian and Islam expert Gilles Kepel, three phases of the global jihad can be distinguished [9]. Whether jihadists focus on the ‘near’ enemy or the ‘far’ enemy is a continuing debate within the various jihadist organisations, including al Qaeda. Some of them focus on the ‘near’ enemy while others focus on the ‘far’ enemy. According to observers jihadists tend to shift from the ‘near’ enemy to the ‘far’ enemy if they come under severe pressure in their own home country. As this pressure varies from country to country, it is logical that we’ll see great variation among various jihadist organisations.

But after Madrid and London, the assassination of Van Gogh and the various plots that have been prevented, it has become very clear that Europe has become a theater for the jihad. The Norwegian researcher Peter Nesser studied jihadi plots and attacks in Europe. He categorised them in three periods and found that the plots and attacks have spread to an expanding circle of countries in Europe [10].

1994 – 1996: Europe functioned as an arena for local jihad, when GIA activists took their local, Algeria-based, struggle to France, in an attempt to deter the former colonial power from further involvement in the conflict between local Islamists and the secularist military regime.

1998 – 2003/2004: Europe functioned as arena for global jihad, when several terror networks linked to and trained by AQ planned and prepared mass casualty attacks against the interests and citizens of the US, Israel, and to a minor extent, France.

2003/2004 – 2007: Europe became a target for global jihad, when AQ inspired Islamist militants planned, prepared, and executed attacks against European countries that contributed to the US-led Global War On Terror (GWOT). Many of these militants were recruited and radicalised within Europe's jihadi underworld, and they appear to have been motivated principally by European participation in the invasion of Iraq.

10.18 PROCESSES OF RADICALISATION IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Dutch government and the Dutch intelligence agencies have been very active in analysing the current threat from jihadist organisations in order to understand the process of radicalisation and in developing countermeasures. A number of key reports and policy memoranda were written with recommendations that are currently being implemented [11]. One of the outcomes of these analyses was that countermeasures will only have effect when they are differentiated and multi-disciplinary. This approach has been successful to a certain degree. Administrative countermeasures taken against a number of radical mosques have reduced radicalisation. Radical Muslims became more aware of the measures and have taken their own precautions. Recent reports indicate that mosques controlled by Salafis are very active in da'wa activities and try to influence other more moderate mosques and organisations. Another trend is that Moroccan groups have tried to persuade Turkish groups to fulfil their Muslim duties. This would be in line with the development we have seen in London with attacks being executed by cells with varying ethnic backgrounds.

The traumatic attacks and the tense situation in the Netherlands have resulted in a wave of academic research on radicalisation, terrorism and counterterrorism. Muller, Rosental and de Wijk have been responsible for the most interesting collection of nearly 1000 pages of research results [12].

Many Dutch researchers participated in a project financed by the European Commission under the Sixth Framework programme. The FP6-project Transnational Terrorism Security and the Rule of Law had its final conference in February 2009 in Brussels. During the two day event experts took part in seven plenary and discussion sessions, providing relevant insights in the current state of affairs. Topics included media and terrorism, radicalisation and counter-radicalisation, security and ethics of counter-terrorism measures, among others. A comprehensive final publication of the research findings will be released later in 2009. The project has its own website with all deliverables and background papers including one on causal factors of radicalisation, containing two case studies on Mohammed Bouyeri and Samir Azzouz. The website also contains a concise report of the final conference.

In one of the workshops interesting insights were presented on the research of successful and failed terrorist plots in Europe. A quarter of the studied plots in some way involved al Qaeda. Furthermore, it was revealed that while home-grown terrorism is indeed rising, the phenomenon is certainly complemented by 'fly-in' terrorists [13].

10.19 DUTCH DEBATE ABOUT COUNTERTERRORISM

In the fall of 2003 a memorandum of the Minister of Justice sketched the new counter terrorism approach of the Dutch government. He defined three counterterrorism goals:

- 1) Prevention of terrorist attacks;
- 2) Preparation of consequence management of an attack with large scale consequences; and
- 3) Attention for the causes of terrorism.

For each of these three goals specific projects have been developed. A national coordinator for counterterrorism was appointed and tasked to structure the activities of the twenty different agencies involved in counterterrorism activities divided over five different ministries.

There has been a debate behind the scenes whether this coordinator and his new organisation should be developed into a separate homeland security department. No further developments in this direction have occurred since the last elections.

10.20 THE NATIONAL COORDINATOR FOR COUNTERTERRORISM

One of the main new features of Dutch counterterrorism policy is the development of the National Coordinator for Counterterrorism (NCTb). This has forced the twenty involved agencies to cooperate in a national framework and has resulted in a national policy. Authority structures and responsibilities are now more clearly defined. Different generic attack scenarios have been developed in order to see at which moment certain measures have to be taken in the preventive sphere, in the crisis management sphere once an attack is ongoing, or in the investigative sphere once an attack has occurred. The scenarios are regularly updated as new assessments become available.

In May 2009 the government published a National Risk Assessment which includes 33 disaster scenarios. The scenarios are divided in thematic sections, including climate change and polarisation and radicalisation.

A number of specific projects have been formulated that are currently being implemented. The Dutch approach to terrorism is much broader than traditional law enforcement. In order to reduce the terrorist threat, developments in the major big cities have to be closely watched. Further segregation has to be prevented and more efforts should be made to integrate the non-indigenous population groups. More attractive alternatives should be provided to youths so that they no longer have to choose between crime or making a jihad. The government is fully aware that this is only possible when Muslim organisations are actively involved in tackling the existing problems.

10.21 PRIORITIES IN COUNTERTERRORISM

Intelligence and law enforcement agencies have been active in defining specific projects in order to focus their limited manpower capabilities on what they consider the most dangerous issues. A major innovation was the introduction of the so-called CT-infobox. This means that several agencies sit physically together in one building with their own information systems that are not connected. But by sitting together they can consult each other on suspect individuals in order to prepare comprehensive CVs of terrorist suspects. These files can be used to make decisions whether legal or administrative action can be taken against a specific person. The method was developed bottom-up and has been gradually expanded. Memorandum Of Understanding's (MOUs) have been developed with the aim of bringing in more government agencies. Also specific research tools have been developed to analyse the information in the databases of the participating agencies.

The NCTb identified the internet as a hotspot of radicalisation. Research on the Hofstad group found that it acted as a virtual organisation and that it followed a multi-media strategy. The group provide foreign productions, including translations and sub-titles, developed its own productions, developed its own web pages, distributed material via public web sites, and made use of encryption. Most interestingly research on the group discovered that material by the group on the internet contained clues about future terrorist attacks. This underlines the important of internet surveillance. After the arrest of Mohammed Bouyeri his computer was confiscated. The documentation on his hard disk was submitted for to an Islam expert of Utrecht University for an analysis. Ruud Peters was able to identify important triggers and events that played a role in the radicalisation process of Bouyeri [14].

Another important investigation was done by Albert Benschop of the University of Amsterdam. As an internet researcher he monitored developments on radical Muslim websites and was able to analyse the development stages of jihadi web-pages in the Netherlands. He identified three important shifts. In 2002

he saw a change in the terrorist threat from an exogenous to an endogenous threat. In 2003 he saw for the first time an explicit focus on the Netherlands as a target for attacks. In the third quarter of 2005 he identified the first independent Dutch jihadi web site. These developments resulted in three overlapping periods: the first period was dominated by foreign-oriented web pages in the Netherlands. In the second period Dutch jihadi sites with a foreign orientation emerged. Finally, Dutch jihadi sites emerged with a focus on the Netherlands [15].

Over the last few years the NCTb has coordinated an informal task group monitoring radical discourse on the internet and formulating policies to counter them. During its work it has identified five categories of sources of radical discourse. For each category different approaches are necessary to counter them. The five categories are: interactive mainstream sites (e.g., Hyves, YouTube); Opinion sites (e.g., Telegraaf, Elsevier, GeenStijl, Fok.nl, Marokko.nl); Hot spots of radicalisation (e.g., thabaat.net, Stormfront, Holland Hardcore); Radical/jihadi material sites (freewebs, geocities, tripod); and finally: Closed sections of radical websites (e.g., password protected virtual networks for insiders).

The NCTb has been involved in a number of activities related to radicalisation via the internet. In its quarterly threat assessments the NCTb reports on ongoing developments based on internet monitoring. The Dutch government has introduced a reporting station on Cyber Crime (MCC). The NCTb will raise awareness of the MCC and inform the public what kind of activities can be reported. When violations of the law are reported a Notice and Take Down (NTD) procedure can be initiated. During the last year the Dutch police have been involved in a large international project to counter child pornography. An extensive study was written by the WODC on filtering of child pornography on the internet which contains important lessons for countering radical expressions on the internet. The government has formulated a specific memorandum on the maintenance of law and order and internet which contains a number of specific countermeasures. The government has developed a legal framework for the Notice and Takedown procedure. The Dutch police have been involved in the so-called Check the Web project. It has created an ICT-portal with EUROPOL, and has participated in a research project on the as-Sahab media production branch of al Qaeda. The government took steps to ratify Art 7 of the Treaty of the Council of Europe (penalisation of documentation that may contribute to the preparation of a terrorist crime) and to integrate the EU framework decision on counterterrorism (penalisation of the training for committing a terrorist crime) in national legislation. Finally, the Dutch government participates in the UN working group on countering the use of Internet for terrorist purposes.

The experiences of the internet working group of the NCTb have resulted in important lessons. The working group will focus its activities on the following three issues. First, it will work on a joint assessment and identification of the hotspots of radicalisation on the internet. Secondly it will develop more coordinated negotiations with providers in order to promote self-regulation and the facilitation of information on signals of radicalisation. Finally it will initiate research into other means than criminal law to influence radical expressions on the Internet.

10.22 CONCLUSIONS

- 1) The threat situation in Europe is worsening and possibly shifting to new areas. During 2008 only one Islamist attack was recorded in Europe, in the United Kingdom. During the same year a total of 187 radical Muslims were arrested, the majority in France, Spain and Belgium. Many of them were involved in terrorist fundraising and logistical support activities. Sketchy information about Islamist terror cells that have been disrupted over the last years indicate that attack planning for new devastating attacks, including suicide attacks, continues.
- 2) By looking at social-economic and demographic trends a number of factors are advantageous to the Muslim population in Europe. In terms of numbers their position will get stronger. If governments

want to reduce radicalisation in the sub-communities of Muslims that are at risk they'll have to spend more efforts on social-economic issues and on integration. Counterterrorism is much broader than just law enforcement as the Dutch experience has shown. The body of knowledge that has been produced on radicalisation during the last years has resulted in a more nuanced and realistic Dutch public opinion about the situation. The level of fear has been reduced and the general feeling of security has improved. The situation is still fragile and unexpected events could easily trigger a backlash. New provocations by rightwing politicians could be exploited by radical organisations and could be used by terror organisations to justify new attacks. The response to 'Fitna' has shown an increasing level of resilience in the Dutch Muslim community.

- 3) The challenge for many European governments, including the Dutch government, is to reconcile a more restrictive immigration policy with a more effective integration policy for the non-indigenous population groups, especially those who are Muslim. The Dutch authorities have made gradual progress in this field although there are still many problems to be solved. A small cadre of hardcore Moroccan youths is still causing headaches for the authorities.
- 4) For decades the different cultural, ethnic and religious groups in the Netherlands lived together peacefully and did not experience serious violent conflict. Compared to other European countries the Netherlands has experienced hardly any violence between social groups and had only limited experiences with inter-group violent conflict. The traumatic incidents of the past years led to tensions and conflicts between Muslims and non-Muslims and eroded the idea of the Netherlands as a peaceful and tolerant country. The restrained response to 'Fitna' may however indicate a gradual rediscovery of its traditions and the importance of adhering to common rules and values and showing a minimal level of mutual respect and understanding. As Geert Wilders has announced the production of a second edition of Fitna, it remains to be seen if this trend can be maintained.
- 5) During the past few years the terrorist threat has gradually shifted from domestic home-grown groups to ad-hoc coalitions of external networked groups that adhere to the ideology of the global jihad and are inspired by messages of the core-al Qaeda leadership. Afghanistan currently has become the main theater of the global jihad where a decisive struggle is to be expected. As the coming period probably will show an increase in the level of violence this may trigger retaliatory attacks against European coalition partners, including the Netherlands. According to Dutch assessments an implicit hierarchy in targets is in use by AQ depending on the number of military personnel involved in Afghanistan. For that reason it is likely that other countries, like the United Kingdom and Germany, will be hit first. The upcoming elections in Germany are another reason that this country probably will be hit first because AQ considers it to be the weakest link in the chain. The terror network is no longer completely dependent on European volunteers to execute attacks in Europe. There are indications that it is willing to use 'ready-made' terrorists from among the Taliban to execute attacks in Europe.

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