

## **Calls for carrying out terrorist attacks against Dutch targets following the injury to Muslim honor**

### **General – the Netherlands and the radical Islam**

#### **The Hofstad network**

In the past years the level of the security threat has risen on European countries in general and on the Netherlands in particular, on the part of radical Islam<sup>1</sup>. The murder of the known Dutch author and director, Theo Van Goch, in November 2004 by a Muslim extremist called Muhammed Boyeri, has awakened the Dutch public awareness to the existing threat<sup>2</sup>. Boyeri, born in the Netherlands of Moroccan origin (born in 1978), slit Van Goch's throat as a protest for his alleged dishonoring of Islam, as expressed in a book he has written on Islam in 2003 called "Allah Knows Best", and in the movie he produced in 2004 called "Submission". On the murdered body Boyeri left a letter containing a promise for Jihad against the Netherlands and the West.

From a strenuous investigation made by the Dutch police it was learned that Boyeri headed an Islamic terrorist group, comprised of 14 members (most of them of Moroccan origin), named the "Hofstad Group" by the Dutch security services. The members of the group, who frequented the "Al-Tawhid" mosque in Amsterdam, were influenced by the militant ideology of the Egyptian "Al-Takfir

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<sup>1</sup> The Netherlands has been forced to deal with the insinuation of radical Islam into the Muslim community living within the Netherlands (comprising of about a million people in 2006). See for example:

<http://www.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/themas/bevolking/publicaties/artikelen/archief/2004/2004-1543-wm.htm>.

<sup>2</sup> Boyeri is currently serving a life sentence for his crimes. See: <http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/320>

Wa Al-Hijra" group<sup>3</sup> and planned, under its inspiration a series of terrorist attacks against Dutch targets, mainly due to the Netherlands' involvement in Iraq<sup>4</sup>. The Group's spiritual leader, Redouan al-Issar, born in 1961 of Syrian origin, managed to escape the Netherlands without trace on the day of Van Goch's murder<sup>5</sup>. The Dutch Minister of Interior in charge of the secret service, Johan Remkes, stated that the Hofstad network has connections with other terrorist networks in Spain and Belgium, and that some of its members even went for training in Pakistan<sup>6</sup>.

On October 14<sup>th</sup> 2005 the Dutch police have managed to apprehend 6 terrorist members of the abovementioned group, on the suspicion that they planned to attack the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Services Headquarters (AIVD) and assassinate a series of Dutch politicians<sup>7</sup>. Amongst those arrested, of special note is Samir Azzouz<sup>8</sup>, who was also arrested in 2003 on the charge of planning a terrorist attack at Schiphol Airport and the Dutch nuclear plant, but released in 2005 for lack of evidence. At the end of 2006 Azzouz was sentenced to 8 years of imprisonment, which became 9 years in October 2008 following an appeal made to the Dutch courts<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> "Al-Takfir Wa Al-Hijra" was founded in Egypt in the 1960's by Shukri Mustafa, a member of the "Muslim Brotherhood". It is a group who views society as heretic and wishes to separate from it. The "Al-Takfir" group has made headlines in 1977 when it kidnapped and murdered the former Egyptian Minister of Wakf, Sheikh Hasan Al-Dahabi.

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.tau.ac.il/Anti-Semitism/asw2005/netherlands.htm>

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.globaljihad.net/view\\_page.asp?id=452](http://www.globaljihad.net/view_page.asp?id=452)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.taipetimes.com/News/world/archives/2004/11/15/2003211161>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/2590>

<sup>8</sup> He too is of Moroccan origin, born in Amsterdam in 1986. In October 2005, Amsterdam police has found a video tape containing his will made in advance before a suicide attack. Amongst the things Azzouz said on the tape: "Osama Bin Laden and Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi have warned you in the past [...], but you performed another injustice, crusaders. You supported Bush [...], just as you have spilled the blood of the citizens in Iraq, we will spill your blood here [...]. For the complete translation of the will see:

<http://islamineurope.blogspot.com/2006/09/transcript-of-samir-azzouzs-statement.html>

<sup>9</sup> [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2008/10/terrorist\\_samir\\_azzouzz\\_jailed.php](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2008/10/terrorist_samir_azzouzz_jailed.php)

## The movie "Fitna"

Alongside the Netherlands' efforts in minimizing the influence of radical Islam in the country<sup>10</sup>, a rising tension is apparent in its relationship with the Muslim minority living within, following the uploading of a movie called "Fitna" to the internet in March 2008 by the Dutch member of Parliament and head of the "Freedom Party", Geert Wilders, who also produced and directed the movie. The movie wishes to warn against the inherent danger arising from the spread of the Islamic religion in the European continent, and points to its fascist and militant characteristics<sup>11</sup>. The movie has evoked harsh responses from the Muslim population both within the country and outside, and was removed from the website it was uploaded to following threats received by the website's owner<sup>12</sup>.

The Jihadi dialogue in the "Al-Hesbah" online forum, used as a conduit for messages from Al-Qaeda and other Jihad organizations, already discussed Geert's intent to upload the anti-Islamic movie to the net in January 28<sup>th</sup> 2008. The online surfer, Abu Abd Al-Razzaq, who has brought the issue for discussion<sup>13</sup>, protests the insult against the Islamic religion and the Prophet Muhammad, and intertwines his words with passages from the Koran calling for the protection of their honor. In addition, he asks that the Muslim community in the west get organized for a campaign calling for the killing Geert and harming Dutch interest, in order to frighten the Dutch people and make them re-think their intention to screen the movie. Al-Razzaq went to the trouble of presenting at length Geert's series of attempts to harm Islam, such as the legislating of a law against wearing

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<sup>10</sup> In 2004 the AIVD has published a report about the threat radical Islam poses to the Netherlands and on the ways of coping with it. See: <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/netherlands/dawa.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> The movie also showed the same caricature drawing of the Prophet Muhammad that caused the riots in Denmark in 2005.

<sup>12</sup> The movie can still be found in various websites. See for example: [http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4vd6k\\_fitna-the-movie-geert-wilders-film\\_news](http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x4vd6k_fitna-the-movie-geert-wilders-film_news).

<sup>13</sup> The title of the discussion was: "Geert Wilders – sons of the heretic Netherlands, the things you will see and not hear". <http://alhesbah.cn/v/showthread.php?t=165272>

a veil in public places, and defines him as "the enemy of Islam". Therefore, Al-Razzaq asks the Muslims to slaughter Geert to death. He even mentions an episode from the times of the Prophet Muhammad, where one of the believers killed another in order to protect Muhammad's honor, and views the murder of Theo Van Goch by Boyeri, whom he calls "the Lion fervent of his religion", as the modern parallel of that historical event. In his eyes, this is the correct response that every Muslim should adopt: "We the Muslim people of the world call you to fight against any who defame Islam, no matter what the consequence, as they do not want Muslims to live in the Netherlands [...] the main reason [for their behavior] is their fear of an increase in the number of Muslims in their country and the feeling of threat that they shall be annihilated in the face of Islam".<sup>14</sup>

The rest of the online surfers responded in the same way and called for the murder of Geert and for taking part in a campaign against him and against the ongoing injury to the honor of Islam. An online surfer named Abu Muayyad writes in Arabic and in German that Geert's fate will be the same as Van Goch's, and threatens: "we are coming to slaughter you, expect a knife"<sup>15</sup>. Another online surfer asks the other surfers to translate "banners" against Geert into English and Dutch, and suggests they be incorporated in the context of Van Goch's murder:



**In the photo we see Van Goch's body and to its left a photograph of Geert**

<sup>14</sup> <http://alhesbah.cn/v/showthread.php?t=165272>

<sup>15</sup> <http://alhesbah.cn/v/showthread.php?t=165272>

A veteran online surfer named "Qandahariyya" has uploaded to the forum another banner in English and Dutch, titled: "we want your head"<sup>16</sup>:



As part of the campaign, a request was made that the banners be published in western forums and websites, especially Dutch ones. One of the forum members directs the online surfers to a registration address in the Al-Hesbah website for those who wish to take part in the campaign and the attack against Geert<sup>17</sup>.

Recently the Jihadi dialogue has reverted to dealing with the Netherlands' detestable attitude towards Muslims and Islam, this time in face of the development in the trial of the Hofstad group members and in face of the intention to air another anti-Islamic movie.

<sup>16</sup> <http://alhesbah.cn/v/showthread.php?t=165272&page=2>

<sup>17</sup> <http://alhesbah.cn/v/showthread.php?t=165272&page=3>

## Particular – the Jihadi forums call for attacking Dutch targets in face of two events

### The first event: a female member of a Muslim terrorist cell is being abused in the Dutch jail

On September 25<sup>th</sup> 2008 the Al-Hesbah online forum posted a report published in one of the Dutch newspapers about the physical abuse of a female member of the Hofstad terrorist group called Soumaya Sahla, of Moroccan origin, in the Dutch jail<sup>18</sup>. This terrorist was first captured on Dutch soil in June 2005, and in December 2006 was sentenced to three years in prison on the charge of illegally carrying weapons and on the charge of membership in a terrorist cell. At the beginning of October 2008 her sentence was prolonged following an appeal made to the Dutch courts and she was sentenced to four years in prison<sup>19</sup>. It should be mentioned that Soumaya was married to one of the members of this terrorist cell, Nouredine Al-Fatmi, who was arrested with her and sentenced to four years in prison<sup>20</sup>.

Several participants in the current Jihadi discussion<sup>21</sup> responded with rage to the report and called for retaliation against the Dutch, in light of Soumaya and the cell members' imprisonment, and called for acting for their release. One of the forum members named "terror" called the Taliban in Afghanistan to kidnap Dutch people stationed there, so that they serve as a bargaining card for Soumaya's

<sup>18</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=193174>

<sup>19</sup> [http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2008/10/terrorist\\_samir\\_azzouzz\\_jailed.php](http://www.dutchnews.nl/news/archives/2008/10/terrorist_samir_azzouzz_jailed.php)

<sup>20</sup> Al-Fatmi was first arrested in Portugal, in the summer of 2004, during the European Football Championship, on the suspicion of planning to assassinate the Portuguese Prime Minister, José Manuel Durão Barroso, but he was released for lack of evidence. See: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/netherlands/1476757/Islamic-terrorists-plotted-attack-at-finals-of-Euro-2004.html>. for more information about his terrorist see: <http://www.militantislammonitor.org/article/id/1547>

<sup>21</sup> The title of the discussion was: "Oh God, avenge against the Dutch infidels: sister Soumaya speaks..." : <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=193174>

release. Another forum member named Jalal asked too that "shocking retaliation action be taken against the Dutch, and against their interests abroad in case difficulty [arises] in carrying it out inside [the Netherlands]".<sup>22</sup>

### **The second event: the Netherlands intends to allow the airing of a cartoon about Islam**

As a direct continuation of these threats against the Netherlands, on October 5<sup>th</sup> 2008, another report was brought up for discussion in the Al-Hesbah online forum<sup>23</sup>, regarding the Netherland's intent to allow the airing of a cartoon about Islam, including segments about the wives of the Prophet Muhammad. Later on in the report it was said that a wide-spread campaign is being organized for the boycott of Dutch products through internet websites, emails and SMS messages as a punitive step against this provocation. The Netherlands, Denmark and other countries, according to the report, continue to offend the Prophet's honor, the Koran and the religious sensitivities of the Muslims, by publishing caricatures and short movies about Islam.

It is likely that this is an attempt to actualize an event from March 2008, when a Dutch artist of Iranian origin named Ehsan Jami, intended to air a movie about the Prophet Muhammad, a movie that was withdrawn following pressure put on the artist on the part of the Dutch Minister of Justice and in face of Iranian pressure<sup>24</sup>. In other words, the report itself is based on old materials and tries to validate itself as a current report. In several Arabic and Islamic online forums,

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<sup>22</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=193174&page=2>

<sup>23</sup> The report was posted by an online surfer named Abu Qannas, member of the forum since November 2005, with over 45,000 correspondences. The title of the discussion was: "The Netherlands is determined to air a movie about the wives of the Prophet Muhammad" : <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311>

<sup>24</sup> See:

[http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/article521586.ece/Jami\\_ziet\\_af\\_van\\_animatiefilm\\_te\\_gen\\_islam](http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/article521586.ece/Jami_ziet_af_van_animatiefilm_te_gen_islam)

including the Al-Hesbah forum, there were those who doubted the veracity of this report. In the "AlJazeerataalk" online forum<sup>25</sup>, where this report was also posted, one of the forum members named naisha, suggests following the source of the reports to ensure the credibility of reports sent to emails. According to her, she has read of the intent to screen an anti-Islamic movie in the Netherlands, but the report on this was published several months ago, and the movie was withdrawn. According to her, the mistake may be due to an email that keeps circulating the net about the burning of a Koran<sup>26</sup>.

As stated, at the Al-Hesbah forum there are also those who doubt the veracity of the report. A veteran online surfer calling himself "rooooh50", member of the forum since June 2003, claims that he doesn't know who wrote this report, and added that's its reliability is doubtful<sup>27</sup>. Whether the report has lost its relevance or not, it has managed to arouse raging responses amongst the forum members. Abu Abdallah Al-Tamimi, member of the Al-Hesbah forum since December 2007, warns the "Crusading Countries" that the Muslims are not afraid to give their lives for the honor of their Prophets. According to him, the terrorist attack at the



Danish embassy in Islamabad is one of several retaliatory actions against western targets, announced by Bin Laden, following the injury of the Prophets honor<sup>28</sup>. His response is accompanied by photographs of the terrorist and the terrorist attack against the Danish embassy<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>25</sup> Considered to be a liberal website, but its online forum contains many Jihadi materials.

<sup>26</sup> <http://www.aljazeerataalk.net/forum/showthread.php?p=1707779>.

<sup>27</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311&page=2>

<sup>28</sup> A detailed report on the subject was sent to a limited distribution.

<sup>29</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311>

A surfer named Abu Khaled Al-Sayyaf, member of the Al-Hesbah forum since December 2007, reminds of the use of suicide bombers as an effective weapon in the hands of Muslims against embassies and western countries' interests<sup>30</sup>. Abdallah Al-Harbi, member of the online forum since April 2008, pleads with forum members and online surfers to translate into action the calls for terrorist attacks. He suggests blowing up Parliament members cars and assassinating those who insult the Prophet Muhammad and the Islamic religion. The online surfer, rooooh50, mentioned above, pleads with the Muslims; despite the doubt he has in the credibility of the report, to translate the calls for retaliatory action into action in the field. According to him, every Muslim should choose a Dutch target and attack it, such as blowing up embassies, industrial plants and companies, or kidnapping Dutch people and filming their decapitation.

"Taleb Al-Du'aa", registered to the online forum since July 2005, is an oddity in this dialogue, and wishes to dispute the notion that the Netherlands is responsible for the future broadcasting of the film. According to him, the Netherlands has denounced the intention to screen the film and therefore is not party to the attempt to insult Mohammed and the Islamic religion. According to him, in other places around the world, including in Arabic countries, Islam is sometimes depicted in a negative light, such as in the movies of the Egyptian actor Adel Imam, the translation of the book "The Satanic Verses" by Salman Rushdi in Japan, and more. In view of this, one has to ask: should the Egyptian companies be harmed as well or should a boycott be put on Toyota products? Therefore, according to him, the Netherlands should not be held accountable for offending Islam. He adds: the Netherlands, is indeed, basically hostile towards Islam, but in this specific case the responsibility lays with the creator of the

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<sup>30</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311>

movie alone<sup>31</sup>. His words garnered only one response; an online surfer calling himself "Mvm" disagrees with this and claims that the Netherlands is responsible for injuring Islam, due to the protection it gives its citizens that offend Islam in the name of freedom of expression. Therefore, he says, terrorist attacks should be carried out against Dutch targets<sup>32</sup>.

### Insight

Form the Jihadi dialogue of late, there appears to be an attempt to inflame the emotions of the Muslims and channel them towards harming Dutch targets, with the reasoning that the Netherlands, will supposedly allow, the airing of a cartoon about Islam including segments about the wives of the Prophet Muhammad. Even though the report itself is apparently irrelevant, as from various reports it appears the movie has been cancelled, the forum members call for retaliatory terrorist attacks against Dutch targets, in various forms, such as: kidnapping citizens, assassinating prominent people, attacking members of Parliament, blowing up embassies and other facilities, and more.

It should be noted at this juncture that most of the forum online surfers do not hesitate to rely on unfounded information and treat is a credible source. In addition, one can see that the information going around in the forum is assimilated, as transpired in the attitude towards the terrorist attack against the Danish embassy and the photograph of the terrorist responsible for the attack.

The call for carrying out attacks against the Netherlands is strengthened in face of the development of a new case, related to the publication of one of the Dutch newspapers about the physical abuse of one of the Muslim female prisoners, convicted of planning a terrorist attack on Netherlands soil currently serving a

<sup>31</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311&page=2>

<sup>32</sup> <http://al-hesbah.info/v/showthread.php?t=194311&page=3>

sentence of three years in prison. The activists in the Jihadi forums call to act for the release of the prisoner Soumaya, and the release of other Muslim terrorist, including Samir Azzouz, member of the Hofstad group terrorist cell, by kidnapping Dutch citizens abroad as a bargaining card.

From the correspondence it transpires that there is an attempt on the part of the online surfers to blacken the Netherlands' image and depict it as a country that supports anti-Muslim policy, expressed in intentional injury to the religious feelings of the Muslim people. This propaganda justifies future terrorist attacks against Dutch targets both in the Netherlands and around the world.

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