



Combating International Terrorism: Germany's Perception of the Terrorist Threat and the Role of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre

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Summary

The author's statement focuses on Germany's perception of the terrorist threat and the role of the European Intelligence Analysis Centre. Despite the loss of IS-held territory, the threat of IS activities remain high. In combatting international terrorism the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre plays a pivotal role.

ISPSW

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Analysis

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am greatly honoured to attend the 3rd *Germany–Indonesia Strategic Dialogue 2019* in Jakarta, and would thus like to express my gratitude to Jan Senkyr, representative of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation in Indonesia, and the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) Indonesia for inviting me to this high-level conference.

To keep within the allotted fifteen minutes, I shall limit my talk to a discussion of two points: Germany's perception of the terrorism threat and the role of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre. Whereas, our intelligence services continue to closely monitor extremism from left and right, the main threat continues to come from the so-called "Islamic State". The discussion period afterwards will, I hope, provide sufficient time for a few examples of terrorist attacks in Germany and our concomitant countermeasures.

Furthermore, in the discussion I would also like to respond to the question "*In which ways can Indonesia and Germany cooperate in the area of counter-terrorism as members of the UN Security Council?*"

Germany's Perception of the Terrorism Threat

In her speech, held at the 55th Munich Security Conference on February 16, 2019, Federal Chancellor Dr. Angela Merkel pointed out that alongside strained relations with Russia, "the fight against terrorism is a major challenge for us". Consequently, Germany "will support the G-5 Sahel troops, who are striving to fight terrorism. We are engaged in Mali and are working to tackle terrorism there and are on the ground to train the armed forces".

Furthermore, at an opening ceremony at the new Headquarters of Germany's Federal Intelligence Service (BND) in Berlin, on Friday, February 8, 2019, the Chancellor emphasized that while IS has been pushed back, it has not disappeared, and has shifted its strategy to full asymmetric warfare. In view of the terrorist threat, collaboration with the US intelligence services is crucial.

Ladies and Gentlemen, precisely how does Thomas Haldenwang, President of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution –Germany's Domestic Intelligence Service (BfV) – perceive the terrorist threat? In an interview with the German newspaper *Welt am Sonntag* on April 14, 2019, Haldenwang cautioned against underestimating the terror militia IS following its military defeat. One must at all times reckon with an attack in Germany.

The headcount of potentially dangerous radical Islamists as classified by the BfV rose by 300 to 2240 in 2018, to which figure potential returnees must also be added. The IS persists, above all, in the form of a virtual cyber caliphate that incites attacks.

Maintaining an around-the-clock overview of all these people would be impossible, since many as 40 civil servants are required to monitor one person. Attention is thus focused on those among them considered particularly dangerous.



The BfV is also concerned about the 300 children of German jihadists still living with their families in territories formerly held by IS terrorist militias in Syria or Iraq. At some point they will return to Germany, after having experienced violence and been subject to indoctrination.

Attempted attacks in recent years indicate that adolescents could become assassins at an early age. For this reason, Haldenwang called for amendments to the law allowing for children to be monitored on a case-by-case basis.

The Role of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN) in Combatting International Terrorism

I would now like to turn to the role of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre in combatting international terrorism.

Intelligence, Ladies and Gentlemen, is not a new phenomenon in the EU.

In the Treaty of Amsterdam of 1997, one reads in paragraph 6.5 of the Declaration on the Establishment of a Policy Planning and Early Warning Unit, that member states and the Commission shall assist the policy planning process by providing relevant information including confidential information, to the fullest extent possible.

When posted to the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EU in Brussels in 2001, I had the privilege of following developments in intelligence analysis within the EU.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington of 11 September 2001, the then High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Xavier Solana, decided to use the existing Joint Situation Centre (SITCEN) to start generating intelligence based on classified information.

On Solana's request, in June 2004 the Council of the European Union agreed to establish a counter terrorist cell within the SITCEN. This cell was tasked to produce counter-terrorist intelligence with the support of the member states.

As of 2012, the EU INTCEN is composed of two divisions:

- The Analysis Division is responsible for providing strategic analyses based on input from the security intelligence services of the member states. It is composed of various sections that treat geographical and thematic topics.
- The General and External Relations Division deals with all legal and administrative questions, as well as open sources analyses. It is composed of three sections, each of which deals with IT questions, internal and external communication, as well as open source analysis, respectively.

In December 2015, Federica Mogherini, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice President of the European Commission, appointed Dr. Gerhard Conrad as the new Director of the EU Intelligence Analysis Centre (INTCEN) at the European External Action Service (EEAS).

The latter formerly held high-ranking posts in the German Foreign Intelligence Service (BND), speaks fluent Arabic and holds a doctorate in Islamic studies. He assumed his post in January 2016.



Among his chief tasks are the strengthening of cooperation between European Intelligence Services, and the provision of valuable strategic analyses to EU decision-makers, including topics in and around international terrorism.

What are the advantages of intelligence cooperation in the European Union?

Information provided by the foreign and domestic intelligence services of the EU member states to the INTCEN has the following merits:

- Intelligence information is garnered from different intelligence and security services, and the various expertise are pooled;
- The overall knowledge-base is consistently augmented;
- The perceived threat is uniformly monitored;
- The common analysis process is fostered, and joint political decisions are supported.

INTCEN maintains further ties with the European Union Satellite Centre (EUSC) in Torrejon, Spain, the European Police Office (EUROPOL) in The Hague, EUROJUST (likewise in The Hague), the EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS) in Paris, and the European Union Agency for Network and Information Security (ENISA) in Heraklion, Crete, with its expertise in cyber security. Furthermore, INTCEN liaises with the foreign offices and the ministries of the interior of the EU member states and is in a position to draw on the expertise of the special representatives in the relevant regions.

More than 100 analysts, including cyber experts from the foreign and domestic intelligence services of the EU member states, are now operative within INTCEN.

Recommendations

Allow me to conclude by way of some recommendations which may prove helpful, also for ASEAN member states:

1. Each country should propose analysis-based solutions for the various intelligence and security services and other institutions may improve cooperation.
2. A watchlist should be instituted to establish priorities for the analysis of present and future threats relevant for the country and the region.
3. Utilizing Open Sources Intelligence (OSINT) should strengthen the knowledge base.
4. Bundling information could be a key to success.
5. Analysis of Internet websites, e-mail traffic and other means of communication utilized by potential terrorists.
6. Information sharing between ASEAN, EU member states, and other states – predominantly between foreign intelligence and security services would be well advised.
7. Harnessing regional expertise on terrorism; “trading information” with foreign services.
8. In order to supplement information from state sources, decision-makers should also draw on the comprehensive knowledge sources of private institutions as follows:
 - a) Provision of analyses on multiple aspects relating to terrorism and other potential threats.



- b) Provision of operative recommendations for action containing political, economic and military options, including “worst case” scenarios.
- c) Establishing contacts to those persons and organizations concerned with terrorism worldwide.

In the struggle against international terrorism, Ladies and Gentlemen, anxiety is a bad counselor. Here, NATO's motto “Vigilance is the Price of Freedom” may be of far greater help to us.

I thank you for your attention and look forward to further fruitful and interesting discussion.

Remarks: The opinions expressed in this contribution are those of the author.

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About the Author of this Issue

Dr Peter Roell has been President of the Institute for Strategic, Political, Security and Economic Consultancy (ISPSW) in Berlin since January 2006. His former post was as Senior Advisor for Foreign and Security Policy at the Permanent Representation of the Federal Republic of Germany to the EU in Brussels. While in Germany, he served the German Government as Director of the Asia-Pacific, Latin America and Africa (Sub-Sahara) Department and at German embassies in the Near and Middle East, and in Asia.

Dr Roell studied sinology and political sciences at the universities of Bonn, Taipei and Heidelberg. He gained his Ph.D. from the Ruprecht-Karls-University, Heidelberg.

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