

EU Proposes Counterterrorism Intelligence Alliance with Islamist Turkey and Arab Nations



Frederica Mogherini EU Foreign Relations Commissioner

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By Jerry Gordon

Yesterday, the EU Foreign ministers met in Brussels and announced a counterterrorism alliance to essentially exchange intelligence information with Islamist Turkey and Arab league members to thwart domestic Jihadi threats. Prior to the EU ministerial meeting there had been a shootout between counterterrorism units and Islamic state veterans in [Verviers, Belgium](#) in which two were killed and one wounded perpetrator captured. Following the Belgian counterterrorism action, ISIS sympathizers with ties to the leader of the Belgian terror cell were [arrested and investigated](#) in Greece. Following the Charley Hebdo and Hyper Cacher kosher supermarket attacks in Paris, France detained several suspects. That may have led to the [arrest](#) last week of a Belgian arms dealer who may have supplied weapons used by Amedy Coulibaly in the deadly Paris kosher market attack.

The formation of this counterterrorism alliance also illustrates the EU's porous open borders created under the

[Shengen Agreement of 1995](#) that enables virtually open transit from Turkey to Norway without any border clearances. Add to that the bar against tracking passenger information on flights that might provide the basis of no-fly lists for suspected persons of interest. The US has that provision under the Patriot Act provisions following enactment after 9/11.

The Daily Sabah in Turkey [reported](#) on the announcement by EU Foreign Relations Commissioner Mogherini:

After the meeting, EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini told reporters about measures to curb terrorism. "We are looking at specific projects to launch in the coming weeks with some specific countries to increase the level of cooperation on counter-terrorism, and I would name Turkey, Egypt, Yemen, Algeria and the Gulf countries."

Swedish Foreign Minister Margot Wallstrom [[considered persona non grata by Israel](#)] said "everyone thinks it's important to engage with Turkey."

"Turkey is central in so many ways and can play a constructive role if they use their position and setting in the right way," Wallstrom added.

EU leaders also decided to call on the European Parliament to work on implementation of the Passenger Name Record system, which would require EU member states to share information of airline passengers with other countries.

Currently, up to 16 EU countries use the record system without an EU framework.

[...]

Mogherini said another strategy on developing cooperation on security issues would be to improve communication with the

Arab-speaking population in EU and other parts of the world.

“We need to improve our capacity to read Arabic, speak Arabic and listen to messages coming from the Arab world,” Mogherini said. “This is basic communication strategy we need to implement.”

Mogherini also met Arab League Secretary-General Nabil el-Araby on Monday.

“The threat is not only the one we faced in Paris, but spreading in other parts of the world starting from Muslim countries,” Mogherini said. “We need to strengthen our way of cooperating, first of all, with Arab countries.”

Mogherini said an alliance between Europe and Arab countries was needed because Muslims were mostly affected by terrorist attacks.

“What we need to do is face terrorism while respecting Islam,” she added.

U.K. Foreign Secretary Philip Hammond told reporters ahead of the meeting: “we have very good cooperation with our partners across the Arab world in counter-terrorism.”

“The Muslim countries of the world are the ones who have suffered the greatest burden of terrorism. They will continue to be in the front line and we have to work closely with them to protect both those countries and European Union countries,” Hammond added.



President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey

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Sources: Reuters

Turkey, a NATO member led by Islamist President Erdogan, is problematic. Incredulously, he [accused](#) both the US and Israel of involvement in the Paris terrorist attacks. Turkey is the gateway for transit of foreign Islamic fighters from the EU to enter Syria. A graphic example of that was the arrival in Istanbul of the common-law widow, [Hayat Boumeddiene](#), of the late [Amedy Coulibaly](#), the perpetrator of the Hyper Cacher Paris attack that killed four Jews, wounding others in the assault. Boumeddiene entered Turkey on a flight from Spain in the company of an Islamic state facilitator just after New Year's five days before she disappeared into Syria. Dr. Harold Rhode, Gatestone Institute Scholar and former US Office of Secretary of Defense expert on Turkish and Islamic Affairs had these comments on Erdogan and his Islamist views in a *JNS* report on the EU alliance announcement, ["Turkey, terror, and tirades: what the Paris attacks reveal about Erdogan's regime"](#):

"Erdogan is an Islamic fundamentalist who is anti-Western and anti-American," Rhode told *JNS.org*, noting that both Erdogan and Prime Minister Davutoglu "grew up in what are called Imam-Hatip schools, which are religious schools in Turkey that preach a form of Islam" that is "doctrinaire." That doctrine, explained Rhode, teaches that "Islam is the only way."

[...]

Islamic fundamentalists first came to power in Turkey in the 1990s under Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan, who Rhode called "the intellectual godfather of President Erdogan, former president Abdullah Gul, and the present Prime Minister Davutoglu."

“Erbakan tried to re-Islamify the society quickly... but the military overthrew him by what the Turks call an ‘e-coup’ (electronic coup),” said Rhode.

[...]

In Rhode’s estimation, Erdogan was always “a vicious anti-Semite” and very intolerant of religious diversity in general.

[...]

America chose “to put its head in the sand” about Erdogan’s true views—as did many past Israeli leaders—while Erdogan “pulled a fast one on the outside world” and on many Turks “who desperately wanted to see him as an Islamic reformer,” said Rhode.

Geert Wilders, leader of the Dutch Freedom Party (PVV) might have [suggested](#) that the EU reaction to the recent Paris and Belgian terrorist episodes came “less than five minutes before the Islamization of the Continent.” Viewed in that context, the EU Foreign Ministerial meeting and announcement of a counterterrorism alliance with Islamist Turkey and the Arab League might be what Bat Ye’or would deem a further example of: [Eurabia: The Euro Arab Axis](#)”.