

The Muslim Brotherhood is the “ideological engine of extremism”, warns former Israeli minister Ayoob Kara in his commentary on JNS.org and explains why the Muslim Brotherhood endangers Israel and Europe. “The question is no longer whether this organization is dangerous. The question is whether free societies will find the courage to defend themselves”.

For years, politicians in Israel and throughout Europe have been trying to separate the political façade of the Muslim Brotherhood from its extremist foundations. They hoped that engaging with the Brotherhood’s “moderate” vocabulary of the Brotherhood could promote stability, integrate Muslim communities and serve as a protective wall against violent radicalism, says Kara.

However, events in Europe – supported by numerous intelligence reports from France, Belgium and the European Parliament – have shown that this strategy is dangerously misguided. “The Brotherhood is not an alternative to extremism. It is the ideological engine that drives it”.

On November 23, more than 70 experts gathered in The Hague to issue a unified warning: The Muslim Brotherhood posed a “global threat to peace and security”. This was based on “hard facts” and the experience of European cities with radicalization, anti-Semitism and terror.

Not just a religion, but a political system

The Brotherhood’s world view is central. It is based on a single premise: Islam is not just a religion, but a political system destined to replace all others. European intelligence reports have documented the goal of transforming societies from within through a “civilizational-jihadist process”. As former Dutch politician Henry Van Bommel points out, this process is slow, strategic and runs through community organizations, student groups, religious institutions, NGOs and lobby networks. The dangerous thing is the ability to “use democratic instruments to advance an anti-democratic ideology”.

For Europe, the fight against parallel societies and radicalization is directly linked to the Brotherhood’s influence. For Israel, the threat is even more immediate, as Hamas is the Palestinian offshoot of the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood not only legitimizes their violence, but also provides the ideological basis: from school books and sermons to online propaganda. The massacres of October 7 are “not an exceptional phenomenon”, but the physical expression of a doctrine that has been

developed over decades.

Its influence is also visible in Europe – for example in demonstrations “where Jewish communities are threatened” and in the spread of anti-Semitic and radical slogans. Authorities have confirmed that organizations associated with the Brotherhood are promoting street riots and divisions.

Brotherhood portrays itself as a victim of racism

The threat also lies in the infrastructure: foreign funding via NGOs, use of state subsidies, recruitment of young people for conflicts abroad, for example from Nigeria, Pakistan and Bangladesh, undermining integration policies, intimidation of internal Islamic dissidents and influencing local and national politics.

Julio Levit Koldorf described a paradox of Europe in The Hague: left-wing activists are “blindly defending a movement” that opposes democracy, human rights, gender equality, LGBTQ+ rights and secular statehood. The Brotherhood portrays itself as a victim of racism while undermining freedoms that are supposed to protect minorities.

The Iranian-Belgian activist Fahimeh Il Ghami said: “If an organization engages in covert financing, intimidation or extremism, the law must react.” Muslims themselves are often the first victims – women, dissidents, secular reformers and minorities.

Not tolerance, but negligence

A Europe influenced by Islamist networks would be “more hostile towards Israel” and more susceptible to manipulation by Iran, Qatar and Turkey – states that have long supported offshoots of the Brotherhood.

Israel’s experience is a warning for Europe: ignoring the ideological roots of extremism is not tolerance, but negligence. “The threat from the Brotherhood is transnational. The reaction to this must also be transnational, writes Kara and concludes: “The question is no longer whether the Muslim Brotherhood is dangerous, but whether free societies will find the courage to defend themselves.

Source: jns.org (unabridged, original English version)