

12<sup>th</sup> REPORT ON  
**ISLAMOPHOBIA**



BY OIC OBSERVATORY

PRESENTED TO THE  
46th Council of foreign ministers

Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates  
1-2 March 2019

June  
**2018**

February  
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**ISLAMOPHOBIA OBSERVATORY  
OIC GENERAL SECRETARIAT  
JEDDAH, KSA**



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**Dr. Yousef A. Al-Othaimeen**  
Secretary General



## PREFACE BY THE OIC SECRETARY GENERAL

It is a pleasure for me to submit the 12th Annual Report of Islamophobia prepared by the OIC Islamophobia Observatory, by which the OIC keeps spotlighting the phenomenon of discrimination against Muslims together with its various manifestations that have seriously disrupt the broad segment of Muslims' life across the world.

Through this observatory, the OIC also seeks to monitor cases of violence and hatred with a view to document and in particular to submit them to the Council of Foreign Ministers of the OIC Member States. In a wider context, the OIC wishes to raise global awareness on the obvious danger of Islamophobia as well as on discriminatory policies and practices against Muslims.

Modernization and internet revolution have turned the world into a global village where religions and cultures should coexist, and where races and nations must live side by side as neighbors. While such a circumstances could facilitate mutuality and coexistence among human races, we can yet see that this opportunity has been under-going serious threat from the enemies of Islam and the peddlers of hatred.

Islamophobia is a sentiment, an excessive fear against Islam that transform into gestures of intolerance, as well as deliberate act of discriminations against Muslims, insults upon Is-

lamic sacred symbols, and event violent crimes against people with Islamic attires. Islamophobia also concerns with intentional attempts to tarnish the image of Islam as religion together with its over one billion followers, the majority of them have in fact built up radiant civilizations and stood as an exemplary model of tolerance and coexistence. Islamophobia covers also racist movements that usurps the right to freedom of thought, belief and identity and targets its victims not for particular action they could have committed, but rather on the basis of their appearances and religious backgrounds. It usurps human rights at their most basic level.

Therefore, Islamophobia does not represent a threat to Muslims only. Rather, it constitutes a threat to the very principles of justice, equality and freedom, just as it represents a threat to security and social harmony. It runs over the achievements of human society evolved over centuries, as well as of human endeavor and sacrifice on the basis of which international institutions have been set up to ensure the preservation of humanity's achievements. In addition, Islamophobia is not a matter of concern for the OIC Member States only. It is rather a cause for mankind at large, the interests of the entire international community, given that it quite simply represents a threat to international peace and security.





Eventually, this phenomenon of Islamophobia commands specific measures to be taken at legal, cultural, religious, academic, political, and humanitarian levels, and I am pleased to state here that the OIC has been trying to do something to tackle this issue, through efforts, strategy, and programs. The OIC seizes every opportunity to open doors for dialogue with the other, since the negative stereotypical image of Islam been etched in the hearts and minds of the hatred advocates cannot be removed except by removing first the fear from Islam and its misapprehension. Through sustained positive dialogue aimed at creating mutual understanding the OIC is trying to address the problem right into the mind and soul of people towards the establishment of coexistence and mutual respect.

Within this context, I wish to bring into the serious attention of decision-makers in the Islamic world that the trend of Islamophobia continued to be alarming, hence I wish to encourage more efforts from all Member States for tackling this disease in the core through national policies including through national education curricula. I believe such measures would be more effective to secure young generations' mind from being poisoned by the advocates of hatred.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, under the terms of its Charter and in the implementation of mandates enshrined from Summits and Ministerial Resolutions, has been consistently present on the international arena, striving to support righteousness, justice, tolerance, moderation and peace, and combating terrorism and extremism on the one hand, while confronting Islamophobia on the other. Along this track, the OIC seeks the constant supports from Member States to help the organisation to fulfill its endeavor towards banishing hatred and racism while spreading love, justice, peace and tolerance among all humankind.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**The 12th Annual Report of the OIC Islamophobia Observatory covers the period from June 2018 to February 2019. The Report contains 4 (four) main chapters and 1 (one) Annex.**

### Chapter

# 1

On 'Islamophobia, Intolerance, and Discriminations against Muslims' describes the increasing trend of Islamophobia under the covered period, indicated by the growing fear against Islam and Muslims which led to negative perceptions among non-Muslims. Within such a circumstance, Islam was seen as an evil religion whose disciples had a tendency to spread harm to the followers of other religions. Islam was also portrayed as an extreme and violent religion prone to bloodshed, a stigma that triggers intolerant attitudes amongst non-Muslims, particularly in the West. These nega-

tive stereotyping eventually ended up into the dread or hatred of Islam that includes multiple forms of discrimination against Muslims around the world, reflected through the exclusion of Muslims from the economic, social, and public life. This negative trend was assessed to have been boosted mostly by 4 (four) factors, namely: Anti-Islam campaign by Far-Right figures in the U.S., provocative attempts by anti-Islam Islamophobes through the holding of cartoon contest depicting the Islamic most revered figure, the rising popularity of Far-Right political parties at elections, and the rise of Identity Politics around the world. On this Chapter, the OIC Permanent Observer Missions in New York, Brussels, and Geneva, as well the OIC Liaison Office in the UNESCO, Paris, have helped the Observatory to elaborate these four factors focusing on their contribution towards the growing Islamophobia during the reviewed period.

### Chapter

# 2

Reveals 'Manifestations of Islamophobia' around the world, being classified into 3 (three) different categories based on geographical consideration: a) Islamophobia in the United States and Canada; b) Islamophobia in Europe, and; c) Islamophobia in the rest of the world. In addition to these three categories, d) 'Other Islamophobic trends' forms a section under the same chapter since it shows a general trend of fear against Islam and its attires which is not necessary regional or geographical in term of character. For this latest category of Chapter 2, the Observatory focuses on Islamophobic gestures and policies against Veil, Hijab, and Burqa; and also on discriminations against Muslims in Employment. Chapter 2 provides a review on how Islamophobia grew strong in the United States and a little bit less concerning in

Canada, and how it continued to take root through intensive media campaigns and public discourses showing 'fear' towards Islam; and also through the significant number of incidents occurring sporadically against Muslims, mosques, Islamic centers, as well as Islamic attires. This Chapter also reveals the fact that more and more Europeans were critical to Muslim population, a condition that feeds to Islamophobia in the continent and tends to lead European societies towards intolerant attitudes against Muslim minorities. It also presents evidence that the number of Islamophobes in Europe keeps increasing during the reviewed period, and that the anti-Islam sentiments has been nibbling the countries across the European continent. Chapter 2 also exposes the concerning trend of Islamophobia in 4 (four) locus of different regions: a) Myanmar; b) China, c) Australia, and; d) India. These locus were chosen based on the Observatory's assessment on the level severity, or due to the potential growing of Islamophobia in the areas. They are presented here in this report in hoping to have particular attention from Member States.





## Chapter

# 3

H ighlights various 'positive developments' in term of friendly actions, attitudes, sentiments, initiatives as well as other steps and positions taken by governments or by non-Muslim individuals towards Islam and Muslims, and their commendable resentments against Islamophobes.

All of these positive signs were classified into seven categories through which such favorable signs were reflected, comprising: public policy, court decision and trials against Islamophobes, positive views on Islam, counter-balances to Far-Rights, support on mosques, positive attitude towards hijabs, and

positive development on inter-faiths. In fact, through this chapter the Observatory wants to bring upon the Member States' attention that counter-balancing power to the Islamophobia does in fact exist in places where the issue of Islamophobia was also concerning.

Most of them were the long-existing products of the spirit of tolerance and harmony within the local society, and many of them flourish as reaction to the growing hate and negative sentiments against Islam and Muslims, based on their awareness on the inappropriateness of discrimination and intolerance within their own society. The positive gestures elaborated in this chapter were undertaken mostly by non-Muslims, whether they are representing the governments, religious groups, communities, or individuals.



## Chapter

# 4

W hich is the last chapter of this report, presents the conclusion of the overall chapters, followed by a set of recommendation

that proposes some steps and actions suggested to be taken by the OIC as well as by the relevant

stakeholders including Member States, while to encourage them to consider taking concrete actions to renounce Islamophobia. The main background of this recommendation is the fact that Islamophobia trend worldwide during the reviewed period has reached an alarming level hence requires immediate actions at international and national levels. Collective and worldwide endeavor to combat Islamophobia is expected to minimize its negative impacts on social life based on tolerance and peaceful coexistence.



## Finally

T he report also includes an Annex showing a list of Islamophobic incidents happened around the world under the reviewed

period, which was classified into 5 (five) categories: Incidents Related to Mosques, Political and Social Campaigns against Islam and Muslims, Intolerance against Islam and its Sacred Symbols, Discrimination against Muslim Individuals and Communities, and Incidents Related to Hijab and dresses associated with Muslim women.





## INTRODUCTION

After a slight relieving decline of Islamophobia last year, again these days, there is a rising tide of Islamophobia and hate speech. At the same time, there were reports and news indicating a worrisome surge in hate crimes and attacks against individuals perceived to be Muslims, mosques and community centers, particularly in Europe and in the U.S. Discrimination and intolerance against Muslims has been increasing since June 2018 and becoming even worse in times closing to the end of the year. Inspired by the victory of ultra-nationalist ideology in some parts of the world, populist politicians were taking the momentum to unleash hatred towards Muslims by exploiting negative sentiments and concerns mounted due to the large movement of refugees and migrants to European land since the last few years, which was in coincidence with the European Union's lowering popularity among the continent's electorals. Anti-Islam campaign by Far-Right figures in Europe and in the U.S. was very intense. What most alarming is that Islamophobia was becoming politically and popularly acceptable for the public opinion and media. Some notorious Islamophobes provoked Muslims around the globe through cartoon contest depicting the Islamic most revered figure, abusing the limit of freedom of expression. Worse still, in certain country, Islamophobia is being institutionalized, and even formalized as government's policy due to the 'seizure' of governments by anti-Islam far right figures and political parties. In different parts of the world, Islamophobia even manifests itself as an 'irrational' response by the government with regard to the issue extremism, by blatantly putting the blame to Muslim communities without exception.

Islamophobia is a phenomenon which is very close-related to the notions of fear, hate, and anger; one could sequentially follow another. From this perspec-



tive, 'fear' could be the initial cycle of Islamophobia. Fear against Islam and anything associated with the religion i.e. Muslims, mosques, Islamic center, minarets, the Holy Qur'an, Hijab, and so on. Very often, such a fear is directed towards certain practices like Halal food standard, men with beard, type of dress and clothes, or simply towards names that sounds 'Arabic'.

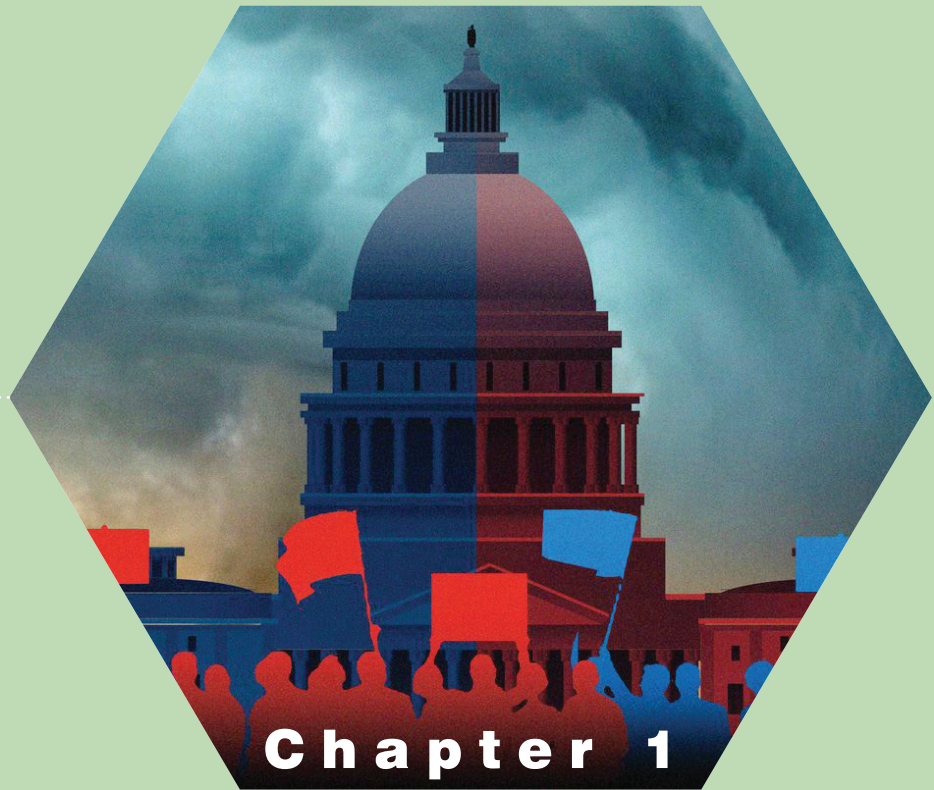
All those things made the Islamophobes to 'hate' the all above-mentioned hence Islamophobia also constitutes racism and discriminations against Muslim individuals in their daily life, in media, in workplace, in political sphere, etc. It means that initially Islamophobia rests in the mind of people but it may then reflect in xenophobic attitudes of hatred and intolerance. Obviously, the mixture could break into 'anger', and as the consequence Islamophobia often manifests into violent acts such as burning mosques, vandalizing Muslims' properties, abusing women wearing scarf, or insulting sacred symbol or the referred figures of Islam. Therefore, the nature of Islamophobia initially involved psychological rather than political, economic, or social elements, and eventually it spills over, affecting the multiple dimensions of human life. At a subsequent point, the disease of Islamophobia was then intermingled with other issues related to politics, economy, social conflicts, religious tensions, extremism, terrorism, democratic values, Freedom of Expression, and so forth.

Islamophobia often become a trend in non-Muslim societies, or in countries where Muslims

are amongst the minority groups. It grows solid in places where Muslims were demographically less in term of number, such as those in the U.S., Italy, Spain, Germany, Netherlands, Denmark, U.K., Norway, Sweden, Belgium, Russia, Myanmar, China, India, Australia, etc.. Such a situation is quite logic since there is a connection between the minority status of Muslim communities and the tend-to-be suspicious gesture of the mainstream majorities, which is considered as 'normal' even in the most democratic countries. However, the minority status of Muslims was not the sole factor, because the seeds of Islamophobia are found diverse in different places. In Southeast Asia such as in Myanmar, Islamophobia was an excess to the existing political issues. In China, Islamophobia seems to be imposed by 'local' government. In many cases in the West, Islamophobia often have strong connections with the issue of immigrant. In the US, the growing phobia was pushed by the mix-factors of domestic politics and massive changes of the global politics; and so on and so forth.

The main task of the Islamophobia Observatory is to 'monitor' those events on daily basis, scanning the minds, public feelings, incidents, and everything that serves as possible indicator of Islamophobia. All of the information were gathered and presented in this report with the expectation that the Member States would have a picture on the trend of Islamophobia around the world during the reviewed period; and hopefully this report could be used as materials for making policies and decisions on relevant issues.





# Chapter 1

## 1. TRENDS IMPACTING ISLAMOPHOBIA, INTOLERANCE AND DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MUSLIMS



There was an increasing level of Islamophobia under the covered period, indicated by the growing fear against Islam and Muslims in certain parts of the world which led to negative perceptions among non-Muslims. Within such circumstances, Islam was seen as an 'enemy'; a religion of intrinsic violence whose disciples had a tendency to spread harms to the followers of other religions. Islam has been portrayed as a 'threat' to western values and civilizations, an 'alien' religion prone to bloodshed, a stigma that trigger intolerant attitudes amongst non-Muslims vis-à-vis their otherwise. These negative stereotyping eventually ended up into negative sentiments, dread or hatred of Islam

that includes multi-form discrimination against Muslims, manifested into the exclusion of Muslims around the world from economic, social, and public life. Within this context, during the reviewed period the Observatory noticed that the negative trend was mostly boosted by 4 (four) factors which have multiplied Islamophobia level, more particularly in Europe and in the U.S., namely: Anti-Islam campaign by Far-Right figures in Europe and in the U.S., provocative attempts by anti-Islam Islamophobes through the holding of cartoon contest depicting the Islamic most revered figure, the rising popularity of Far-Right political parties at elections, and the rise of Identity Politics around the world.



## 1.1. Anti-Islam campaign by Far-Right figures in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>



Islamophobia and anti-Muslim campaigns in the U.S. continue to remain steady and strong. Anti-Muslim rhetoric has been in use for years, but until recently, it remained mostly on the fringes of the mainstream according to Scott Simpson, the primary author of a study entitled “Running on Hate”.

Muslims in the U.S. continue to suffer from various forms and manifestations of Islamophobic and anti-Muslims incidents as hate crimes and bias against Muslims remained unabated. Political campaigns were emboldened by President Trump’s ascent to the White House. In addition, the 2018-midterm elections have seen a dramatic rise in anti-Muslim rhetoric. Findings of various reports reveal the depth

of anti-Muslim campaigns and manipulating anti-Muslim sentiments ahead of the midterm vote. It was observed that a significant number of candidates nearly all Republicans, were using terrorism threats or Islamophobic rhetoric to smear their political opponents.

According to some reports, over 80 candidates espoused typical Islamophobic narratives and conspiracy theories often insinuating that Muslim extremists were infiltrating the US federal government. Throughout the election cycle, Muslim-American candidates were the subject of fake news from anti-Muslim websites, online harassment and armed protests. Although the recent 2018-midterm cycle was considered by many to be the most Islamo-



phobic election in the US, it was indeed encouraging to note that this type of anti-Muslim fear mongering in American politics, did not help campaigners win.

The power of the far right circle within the White House, has been drastically reduced. With Steve Bannon's departure, the Breitbart faction has become marginalized. The resignation of the former attorney general, Jeff Sessions, who was considered threat against the rights of minorities, further weakened the far right group within the administration. However, Stephen Miller, far-right political activist who serves as a senior advisor for policy for President Donald Trump, despite being close to both Bannon and Sessions, remains as influential figure and a powerful player on immigration.

While radical right discourse dominates US politics, and radical right policies have become mainstream within

broad sections of the "conservative" movement, radical right leaders and organizations are struggling to adapt to the changed environment. According to a New York Times' article published on 3 November 2018, outside the White House, the situation of the far-right movement was not much better. It underscores, "The extreme right, hiding behind the term "alt-right", of racists like David Duke and Richard Spencer has expressed great political ambitions, but has been unable to bring together a significant number of people since the deadly demonstration in Charlottesville. They remain an online troll army, which mainly survives because of the disproportionate attention of the (mostly liberal) media. They have no political relevance outside of their violent potential."

White supremacists and other far-right extremists have killed far more people since Sept. 11, 2001, than any other category of domestic extremist. The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism has reported that 71 percent of the extremist-related fatalities in the United States between 2008 and 2017 were committed by members of the far right or white-supremacist movements. Data compiled by the University of Maryland's Global Terrorism Database shows that the number of terror-related incidents has more than tripled in the United States since 2013, and the number of those killed has quadrupled. In 2017, there were 65 incidents totalling 95 deaths. In a recent analysis of the data by the news site Quartz, roughly 60 percent of those incidents were driven by racist, anti-Muslim, anti-Semitic, antigovernment or other right-wing ideologies. Muslim extrem-







ists committed around seven attacks. The Far Right Represents Only 6% of U.S. Citizens, according to some reports.

These statistics contradict the strident rhetoric around “foreign-born” terrorists that the Trump administration has used to drive its anti-immigration agenda. They also raise questions about the United States’ counterterrorism strategy, which for nearly two decades has been focused almost exclusively on American and foreign-born jihadists, overshadowing right-wing extremism as a legitimate national-security threat. According to a recent report by the nonpartisan Stimson Center, between 2002 and 2017, the United States spent \$2.8 trillion — 15 percent of discretionary spending — on counterterrorism. Terrorist attacks by Muslim extremists killed 100 people in the United States during that time. Between 2008

and 2017, domestic extremists killed 387 in the United States, according to the 2018 Anti-Defamation League report.

“We’re actually seeing all the same phenomena of what was happening with groups like ISIS, same tactics, but no one talks about it because it’s far-right extremism,” said the national-security strategist P.W. Singer, a senior fellow at the New America think tank. During the first year of the Trump administration, Singer and a colleague met with a group of senior administration officials about building a counterterrorism strategy that encompassed a wider range of threats. “They only wanted to talk about Muslim extremism,” he said. But even before the Trump administration, he said: “we willingly turned the other way on white supremacy because there were real political costs to talking about white supremacy.”



## 1.2. Cartoon Contest Depicting the Islamic most-revered figure, and the Limit of Freedom of Expression <sup>2</sup>

Dutch politician Geert Wilders, far-right MP of PVV is an avowed Muslim hater. Over the years he has been taking many provocative stances against Islam and Muslims. It is recalled that previously he had even called for the Holy Quran to be banned, mosques to be shut down and for a blanket ban on Muslim immigrants in the Netherlands. As part of his hostile and vicious campaign against Islam and the Muslims, Mr. Wilders had planned to host a cartoon competition on Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), in the autumn of 2018. His party, PVV had offered a € 5,000 (£4,400) prize for the winner of the competition. American cartoonist Bosch Fawstin, winner of the disastrous cartoon contest in Texas in 2015, had been asked to judge the Dutch contest. In a later development, Greet Wilders announced withdrawal of the planned so-called cartoon contest mentioning that “to avoid the risk of victims of Islamic violence, I have decided not to let the cartoon contest go ahead”. He also claimed to have received death threats.

Political analysts believe that the proposed competition was merely a publicity stunt by Wilders to get media and public attention in the face of waning support in the country. While this could might as well be the case, Greet Wilders has a nuisance value and his anti-Muslim rhetoric is a matter of concern in the context of present European political scenario against the backdrop of growing right winged populism. Wilders is accused by critics of being an “unscrupulous provocateur”. It was apprehended that such competition would provoke protests and even violence which may not necessarily be confined to the Netherlands. The

Dutch government, for its part, had all along distanced itself from the “contest”, with Prime Minister Mark Rutte clarifying that “Wilders is not a member of the government” and has always been provocative. Notably, however, the government authorities, as in the past, are likely not to take a stand against such provocation on the pretext of so-called principle of freedom of expressions.

There has been continued debate notably, in the West about the “freedom of expression and respect for Religious Beliefs”. Striking the right balance has always been the issue.

According to the European Court of Human Rights under freedom of expression as guaranteed by Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights it must be possible, in a democratic society, to criticize religious ideas, even if such criticism may be perceived by some as hurtful to their religious feelings. The European Court of Human Rights however, acknowledged, as a matter of principle, that it may be considered necessary to sanction improper attacks on objects of religious veneration. The crux of the matter is whoever exercises his freedom of expression undertakes “duties and responsibilities”. In the context of religious opinions and beliefs – this may legitimately be included an obligation to avoid expressions that are gratuitously offensive to others. Thereby the EU Member states could legitimately take measures aimed at repressing certain forms of conduct judged incompatible with the respect for the freedom of thought, conscience and religion of others guaranteed by Article 9 of the Convention.

The recent ruling of the European Court of



Human Rights on the case on defamation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is very interesting as it strikes a balance between freedom of expression and respect for Religious Beliefs". The ECHR in an unprecedented ruling (October 25) upheld a decision of an Austrian Court, concluding that defamation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) constituted incitement to hatred and therefore, "goes beyond the permissible limits of an objective debate" and therefore, convicting someone for disparaging religious doctrines was not a violation of the European Human Rights Convention Art.10 on freedom of expression. It further noted that the right to expression needed to be balanced with the rights of others to have their religious feelings protected. The case relates to an Austrian woman, Elizabeth Sabaditsch-Wolff, who in a series of lectures during a seminar on Islam, in 2009 had made extremely derogatory remarks against Prophet Muhammad (PHUB) on his marriage to Hazrat Aisha (RA) in the Vienna court she was found guilty in 2011 of "denigrating religious beliefs" and was convicted to pay a fine of 480€. Her appeal against this ruling was also dismissed by the Austrian Supreme Court. Thereafter, she took her case to a higher European level, namely, the ECHR, arguing that the domestic Austrian courts have failed to uphold her freedom of expression and those religious groups had to tolerate even severe criticisms.

The present verdict of the ECHR rejects Ms. Wolff's appeal. It asserts that the Austrian domestic courts had "carefully balanced the applicant's right to freedom of expression with the rights of others to have their religious feelings protected, and to have religious peace preserved in Austrian society". The Court also observed the subject matter of the case was a particularly sensitive nature, and "where ex-

pression under Art.10 went beyond the limits of a critical denial, and certainly where they were likely to incite religious intolerance, a State might legitimately consider them to be incompatible with respect for the freedom of thought, conscience and religion and take proportionate restrictive measures." The ECHR's above ruling is certainly historic given that it puts a limit to unbridled freedom of expression, most expressly so, in instances of denigrating religious beliefs. This is certainly a welcome development and sets a good precedence. This showed that freedom of expression has its limits.

The European Commission issued on 19 January 2018, the third evaluation of the Code of Conduct on countering illegal online hate speech carried out by NGOs and public bodies, showing that IT companies removed on average 70% of illegal hate speech notified to them. Since May 2016, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Microsoft have committed to combatting the spread of such content in Europe through the Code of Conduct. The EU Code of Conduct complements legislation fighting racism and xenophobia which requires authors of illegal hate speech offences - whether online or offline - to be effectively prosecuted. The third monitoring round shows that the companies are now increasingly fulfilling their commitment to remove the majority of illegal hate speech within 24 hours. However, some further challenges still remain, in particular the lack of systematic feedback to users. Google+ announced that they are joining the Code of Conduct, and Facebook confirmed that Instagram would also do so, thus further expanding the numbers of actors covered by it. The European Commission also underlines that "It is also important that safeguards are in place to avoid over-removal and protect fundamental rights such as freedom of speech."



### 1.3. The Rising Popularity of Far-Right political parties at elections <sup>3</sup>

The political landscape in Europe has changed significantly over the past two decades, resulting in the global wave of populism and the unprecedented rise of anti-establishment, nationalist and extreme right-wing parties across the continent and abroad. For reminder, back in 1998 only Switzerland and Slovakia had populists in government. The populist upsurge in the Old Continent has been building steadily over the past several years. Analysts have listed the various causes from “recession to migration, social media to globalisation”, loss of trust in institutions and Brussels ruling establishment, left’s identity crisis, debt-laden economy, unemployment and widespread feeling of insecurity. Whatever may be the causes, the common feature of those populist political parties is Islamophobia.

Victor Orbán’s Fidesz in Hungary, Jaroslaw Kaczyński’s Law and Justice in Poland, Geert Wilders’ anti-Islam Freedom Party (PVV) in the Netherlands, Andrej Babiš’s Ano in the Czech Republic, Marine Le Pen’s National Rally, Luigi di Maio’s Five Star Movement and Matteo Salvini’s Northern League in Italy, Jörg Meuthen’s Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Heinz-Christian Strache’s Freedom Party (FPÖ) in Austria, to name only a few, have recorded remarkable results during the recent elections.

In Italy, during the general elections in March

2018, the anti-establishment Five Star Movement of Luigi di Maio obtained 32.66 per cent of the votes and secured an important number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate. The right-wing Northern League obtained 17.37 per cent while Brothers of Italy, a radical right party, gained 4.35 per cent of the votes. The country’s traditional parties were defeated and the new populist coalition government was formed. The new Italian’s Interior Minister, Matteo Salvini, who is now responsible for policing, national security and immigration policies, has emerged on the European stage. When Salvini became the leader of the League, the party’s longstanding rhetoric calling for Northern Italy’s secession from the South changed and focused primarily on immigration, national security concerns, identity issues and unemployment. Since taking office, he regularly threatens to shut down mosques in Italy and claims that Islam is incompatible with the Constitution.

In Hungary, during the parliamentary election in April 2018, the populist right-wing Fidesz Party of Victor Orbán won the majority of seats and thus reasserted its dominance over the political landscape of this eastern-European country. The Hungarian Civic Alliance (Fidesz) and its coalition partner the Christian Democratic People’s Party (KDNP) regained the two-thirds constitutional majority by winning 134



seats out of 199 in the Parliament. The far-right Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik) came in second place with 25 seats. In its election campaign, Fidesz propagated ethnic nationalism and reduced its message to anti-immigrant slogans, linking immigration with the spread of terrorism. Orbán presented himself as the defender of Hungary and Europe against “Muslim invaders” claiming that his country was a last bastion in the fight against the “Islamisation” of Europe. The three-time Prime Minister defended his country’s refusal of the European Union’s resettlement program and framed the issue of refugee resettlement as a “clash of civilizations”. He declared that “we do not consider migrants as Muslim refugees but as Muslim invaders”. He claimed that “non-registered immigrants from the Middle East” bring “terrorism, crime, antisemitism and homophobia” and argued that allowing in large numbers of “anti-Semitic Muslim migrants is the real threat to Jews”.

In Germany, after September 2017 election, the radical rightwing Alternative for Germany (AfD) has entered Bundestag as the third-largest party by winning 91 seats out of 709 in the federal parliament. The election results marked a shift in German politics and reconfiguration of the political scene in the country. Angela Merkel has secured a fourth term as German chancellor. Meanwhile, her authority has been diminished as the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) has registered the worst electoral performance since 1949. As of 1 January 2018, the

German police has started registering Islamophobic crimes in a special category in order to take concrete measures in the face of the ever-increasing anti-Muslim acts.

In Austria, the coalition formed in 2017 between the conservative People’s Party of Sebastian Kurz, current chancellor, and the rightwing Freedom Party (FPÖ) of Heinz-Christian Strache, vice chancellor, marked a shift in the country’s politics to the right. Known for its anti-Muslim leanings, the Austrian government shut down some mosques and took some measures in order to fight against radical Islam but observers fear that those measures may be used to closely monitor and restrain the religious space of the Muslim community in Austria.

It is to be noted that Islamophobia is not specific to the far-right political parties. The migratory phenomenon gave rise to fear and misperception in Europe. As a matter of consequence, many European countries, be it under the pressure of their civil society or by political opportunism, have pointed out Islam as the “problem”.

It is also a way for them to divert their population from the strained economic situation they are facing. We can notice this trend in France, for example, which is not governed by a far-right political party but in the face of the yellow vest protesters that is sweeping over the country, the President Macron in one of his statements to the country said that a national





debate should address the issue of immigration. The French population refused to get into this trap and rightly underlined that the issue of immigration was not at all on the agenda of the yellow vests movement.

The upcoming European Parliament elections, which will be taking place from 23 to 26 May 2019 in the 27 EU Member States, are going to be decisive. They could possibly reinforce the growing popularity of the wide range of the European extremist, far-right, populist and nationalist parties. Victor Orbán has already described the election of candidates for Europe's 751-member parliament as an important milestone "when the forces defending Christian Europe will be ranged against the political forces promoting immigration".

It is also worth noting that Islamophobia is not specific to European countries. In Brazil, during the second-round vote on 28 October 2018, a far-right politician Jair Bolsonaro from

the Social Liberal Party has been elected as the 38th president of the largest country in South America, winning 55 per cent of the vote in a runoff against the left-wing Workers' Party (PT) candidate Fernando Haddad. Despite his relative political obscurity, he succeeded in getting the populist message across and taking over the elections.

His political engagement was marked by several discriminatory comments on race, misogynistic remarks and offensive statements against minority communities. The press reported that he called refugees "scum of the humanity" and stated that since the State is Christian, the minority who opposes this fact, should go. After the election, Bolsonaro reiterated his intention to transfer the Brazilian Embassy from Tel-Aviv to the occupied city of Jerusalem. He has been an opponent of Palestinian statehood since the 1990s and vowed to close the Palestinian mission in Brasilia.



## 1.4. The rise of Identity Politics around the world <sup>4</sup>

Identity politics refers to the idea that political stands are grounded in ethnicity, race, or religion rather than on broader policies. The concept of identity politics first grew on the left-side of the political spectrum, but it has quickly become a powerful tool used by far-right movements and parties in the West and beyond. Traditionally, politics in the West was framed around economic issues surrounding how much the state should interfere to ensure equal opportunities to all its citizens, versus how much freedom to allow to individuals and the private sector to strive. However, over the past decade, the nature of global politics has been shifting and has become dominated by identity rather than ideology. Indeed, today's political landscape is increasingly characterized by as-

sertions of identity and group belongingness.

The shift of global politics from ideology to identity is linked to the recent widespread populist revolt against globalization and its disruptive cultural dimension. The growth of populist movements in Western political spaces is not only grounded in the discontent with Globalization's unequal economic consequences, but also on the threats to traditional national identities arising from high levels of migration; which have given birth to anti-immigrant populism and the emergence of white nationalism. Identity politics has become a powerful tool in contemporary politics that has fostered, for instance, President Donald Trump's election as well as the Brexit.







The rise of identity politics particularly impacts Muslim minorities scattered around the World. Indeed, it has become the main framework of debates for the right and far right of the political movements, boosted by recent successes of such parties in national politics. In Europe, there is widespread anxiety among the ethnic majority about the assumed growth of Islam and Muslims within their societies. Faith, Religious visibility and practice are used to create a homogenous group portrait that demonizes Islam and Muslims. Islam is defined as inherently alien and incompatible with Western cultural values.<sup>5</sup> It is associated to violence, terrorism, and struggle for world domination. The increased visibility of Muslims in Europe—coupled with the influx of immigrants originating from Muslim countries has led to a strengthening of nativist ideologies that essentialize Muslims in general and Muslim immigrants in particular as a threat to security, and national

identity. Nativists promote Western cultural homogeneity as an alternative to cultural and religious diversity.

In this context, the Muslim demographic is becoming a critical issue not only for politicians but also for so-called intellectuals who view Muslims as posing the most acute problems on account of their religion and their numbers. Right wing parties, such as Pegida, clearly fuel the fear of a so-called Islamization of Europe and “the great replacement”. This theory first popularized by French-author Renaud Camus, states that the white Christian European population at large is being systematically replaced with non-European people, specifically Middle Eastern, North and Sub-Saharan African populations through mass migration and demographic growth. It associates the presence of Muslims in the West with potential danger and destruction of Western culture and civilization.



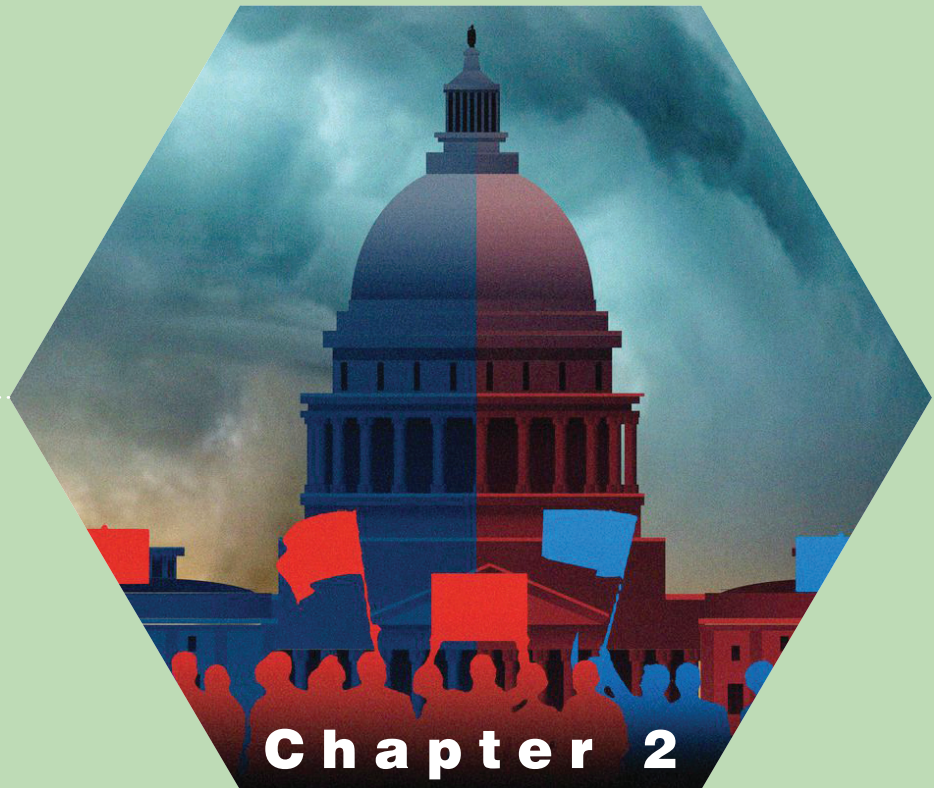
To give an example of this fear over Muslim Demographic that feeds identity politics in Western countries, it is worth mentioning the International surveys that shows that Europeans greatly overestimate Muslim population and the rate it is growing. Hence, the International survey found that French respondents estimated the percentage of Muslims in France at 31%, while the real percentage does not exceed 6%. Germans gave the percentage at 19% in spite of the actual 4%.<sup>6</sup> The most worrying trends is that many in the West, and not just reactionary nationalists, have become wary of rapid cultural change they deem linked to mass migration from Muslim countries. Thus, some of the toughest measures to control immigration today are being implemented in liberal countries like Denmark, Holland, and Sweden. Many Europeans wrongly perceive Muslim immigration as a threat to women's rights, and freedom of thought. Hence, the rise of identity politics has

clearly become a threat to democracy and to minority rights, including those of Muslims. Indeed, identity politics feed a political discourse of othering and fear, underpinned by essentialization of cultures and religions and stigmatization of Muslims.

The Western portrayal of Muslims is a fantasy that overlooks the diversity of Muslim communities in the West. They are immensely divided in their faith, in their ethnicity and also in their relation to religious practice and to the role religion plays in their lives. Furthermore, recent International studies have shown the high-level of loyalty to their host-states and trust in democratic institutions that European Muslims have despite pervasive discriminations and harassment.<sup>7</sup> But identity politics, based on racialization, and stereotyping greatly distorts the so-called Muslim threat to Western values and civilization.







## Chapter 2



# MANIFESTATIONS OF ISLAMOPHOBIA CONE WORD



## 2.1. Islamophobia in the USA and Canada

### 2.1.1. Polls and Reports

Islamophobia — in the form of prejudice and discrimination against Muslims — had been on the rise in the U.S. since 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001. It continued until today and had even been worsening over the years due to some factors such as the US' military engagement in the Middle East, negative portrayal of Muslims in the media, the spread of anti-Islam rhetoric, as well as lack of understanding of the religion itself. As a result, living as Muslim in the American society today would be much different with the same life of twenty years before, at the period before 9/11 tragedy happened. It was now very common to see that the safety tips, concise and chilling, were passed from friend to Muslim friend on social media, by imams to their congregations, by Islamic groups to their members, by parents to their children heading off to school: When in the subway, "Stand away from the platform edge, preferably with your back against a wall", "Walk in groups after dark," "Stay alert at all times", etc.

Muslims in America-

can big cities and elsewhere had guarded against discrimination and hates, changing their routines and trying to manage their fear. Still, the violence had come. Quite recently, several Muslims in New York, mostly women wearing head scarves, had reported being victims of verbal abuse and physical assault. Even some non-Muslims — including people mistaken for a Muslim — had been subjected to Islamophobic taunts.<sup>8</sup> Brief, the United States is not anymore a very safe place to live for Muslims since more and more American non-Muslims feels anxious and fearful with their presence.

FBI data showed spike in US hate crimes, jumped 17 percent in 2017, with a spike in Islamophobic attacks and anti-Semitic incidents, marking the third year in a row that such attacks had increased, according to an FBI report released in November 2018. In all, the year 2017

saw a 58.1 percent spike in anti-Semitic incidents and an

18.6 increase

in Islamo-

pho-







bic attacks. More than half of the 7,175 hate crimes reported to the FBI by law enforcement agencies nationwide last year involved acts against individuals such as assault or intimidation, while 3,000 were attacks against property including vandalism, or robbery. Nearly two-thirds, 59.6 percent of the victims were targeted based on their race, ethnicity or ancestry. Roughly 20 percent of victims were targeted because of their religion while about 15 percent were victimised based on their sexual-orientation. Anti-black bias motivated roughly half of all race-based hate crimes, followed by 17 percent of incidents that were motivated by anti-white bias and 11 percent that were motivated by anti-Latino bias. Of the 6,370 known offenders in the report, 50.7 percent were white, while 21.3 percent were Black or African-American. Critics said Trump's rhetoric has fomented a surge in right-wing extremism and might have even helped provoke the hate crimes. The Trump administration meanwhile had rejected

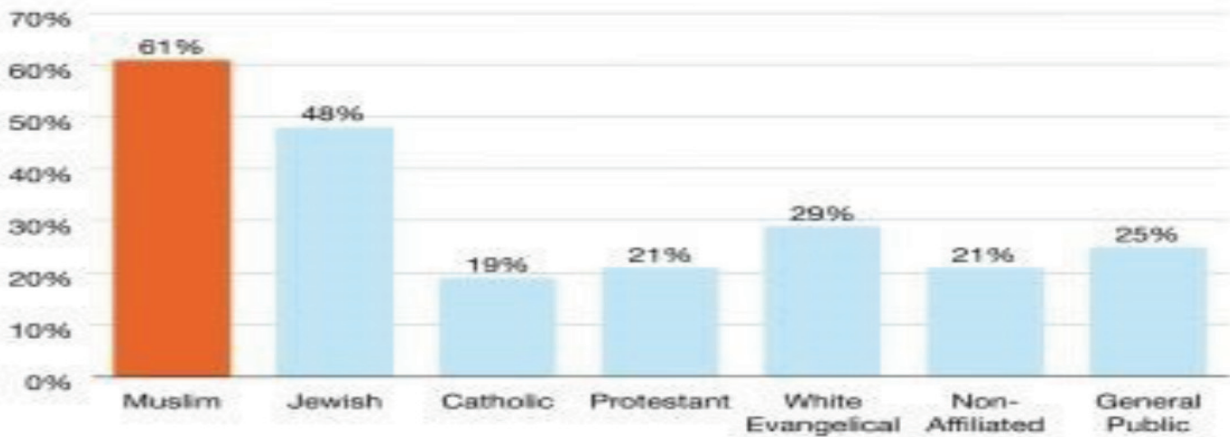
any notion that he had encouraged white nationalists and neo-Nazis who had embraced him, insisting the president's true aim was to unify America.<sup>9</sup>

According to a new survey that showed the reach of President Trump's effort to limit some travelers from mostly Muslim nations, Muslims were viewed as insufficiently American, as one in five people in the U.S. would denied them the right to vote. In the survey entitled "Muslims in America," data from the Views of the Electoral Research Voter Survey from the Democracy Fund Voter Study Group found:

- Americans viewed many Muslims in the United States as insufficiently "American."
- Perceptions of Muslim Americans were strongly related to partisanship and cultural conservatism.
- There was significant support, especially among Republicans, for policies that



## Muslims Experience the Most Religious Discrimination



**FIGURE 18:** How often, if at all, have you personally experienced discrimination in the past year because of your religion? (% Net ever experienced shown) Base: Total respondents

would temporarily ban Muslims from entering the country and, for Muslims within the country, subject them to additional surveillance. Almost 20 percent of Americans would deny Muslims who were American citizens the right to vote.

The survey of 5,000 respondents found that Americans put Muslims at the bottom of a list of other groups, with a 48 percent approval. The survey analysis also showed support for Trump policies. Some 47 percent backed the Muslim ban and higher majorities “favored increased surveillance of mosques” and the targeting of Muslims at airport screenings.<sup>10</sup>

A survey conducted by New America in collaboration with the American Muslim Institution (AMI) to examine the general public’s perceptions of Muslim Americans. The “Americans’ Views of Muslims Survey” provided the similar ‘negative sentiment’ with regard to public perceptions of Muslim Americans at both the national and local levels. The survey was held in

Houston, Orlando, Tampa, and the Washington, DC, metropolitan area; according to which Americans were largely accepting of Muslim Americans, but more than half of the respondents expressed concerns about the spread of extremism within Muslim communities in the United States. 1/3 of the respondents felt uncomfortable when they saw Muslim Americans wearing a veil or other Islamic attire, were concerned if a mosque or Islamic centre was built in their neighbourhood and believed Muslims should be subject to extra security screenings at airports. According to the report, meanwhile, a majority of non-Muslim Americans (71%) agreed there was a lot of discrimination against Muslim Americans.<sup>11</sup>

A study co-conducted by the New America foundation and the American Muslim Initiative announced in November 2018 said that over 40 percent of non-Muslim residents of the U.S. believed Islam was not compatible with





American values. According to the findings, 56 percent of individuals in the US thought Islam was compatible with American values while 42 percent said the religion was incompatible. A large majority - 74 percent - acknowledged Muslims faced a lot of bigotry while 56 percent expressed concern about the spread of extremism in American-Muslim communities. The survey found Republicans were significantly more likely to view Islam and Muslim Americans negatively, with over 70 percent thinking Islam "incompatible with American values." 56 percent of Republicans expressed concern should a mosque hypothetically be built in their neighborhood. The researchers also found that just under half of respondents personally knew a Muslim.<sup>12</sup>

Another instance is in California, where Islamophobic incidents were skyrocketing under the administration of President Donald Trump. According to a report released in August 2018

by the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) -California advocacy group, the sobering new numbers indicated how xenophobic rhetoric and policy from on high inspire hate at the grassroots level, even in a state like California, typically viewed as a bastion of liberalism and diversity. The incidents included the vandalization of mosques, physical assaults, and discrimination at the hands of federal employees. Nearly half (44.9 percent) of all incidents were located in airports, amid the Trump administration's repeated attempts to enact executive orders barring the citizens of a handful of Muslim-ma-







Sputn

jority nations.<sup>13</sup>

In Philadelphia, CAIR claimed anti-Muslim bullying in the city's schools had risen steadily since 2014, with a 17-percent increase from 2016-2017. During the past twelve months, CAIR said of having received "more than a dozen complaints of anti-Muslim bullying tar-

geted at 15 to 20 students in 13 schools and colleges in the region," according to CAIR lawyer Timothy Welbeck. Philly.com reported recent cases involve an 11-year-old having her head scarf yanked off by another student, a Catholic school

principal reporting a student to the FBI for a project that included 'action scenes' like explosions and another student was called "ISIS" after the 2015 San Bernadino mass shooting. CAIR-Philadelphia's education and outreach director emphasized that Muslim students, especially young children, were reluctant to speak up about their experiences with anti-Muslim incidents or contact their office. Welbeck noted in an email that he conducted an anti-bullying workshop for roughly 50 Muslim children in Bensalem, at which a third of them said they had experienced bullying, but "only a fraction" said they reported the incidents.<sup>14</sup>

Why such a negative sentiments in the U.S. against Muslims? It was now believed that a factor had continuously playing major role: the popularity of extreme rights following the victory of Donald Trump.

Right-wing extremism in the United States was growing so fast. Of particular concern were





## Islamophobia Index

Most Muslims living in the United States... (% Net agree shown)	Muslim	Jewish	Catholic	Protestant	White Evangelical	Non-Affiliated	General Public
Are more prone to violence	18%	15%	12%	13%	23%	8%	13%
Discriminate against women	12%	23%	29%	30%	36%	18%	26%
Are hostile to the United States	12%	13%	9%	14%	23%	8%	12%
Are less civilized than other people	8%	6%	4%	6%	10%	1%	6%
Are partially responsible for acts of violence carried out by other Muslims	10%	16%	11%	12%	14%	8%	12%
Index (0 min – 100 max)	17	22	22	31	40	14	24

TABLE 1: Most Muslims living in the United States are more prone to violence than other people. Most Muslims living in the United States discriminate against women. Most Muslims living in the United States are hostile to the United States. Most Muslims living in the United States are less civilized than other people. Most Muslims living in the United States are partially responsible for acts of violence carried out by other Muslims. (% Net agree shown) Base: Total respondents

white supremacists and anti-government extremists, such as militia groups and so-called sovereign citizens interested in plotting attacks against government, racial, religious, and political targets in the United States. The October 27, 2018, Pittsburgh synagogue shooting by Robert Bowers, and the arrest a day earlier of Cesar Sayoc who sent pipe bombs to prominent Democrats, appeared to be the most recent manifestations of the trend. Both perpetrators were far-right extremists. Although violent left-wing groups and individuals also present a threat, far-right-networks seemed to be better armed and larger. There also was a continuing threat from extremists inspired by the Islamic State and al-Qaeda. But the number of attacks from right-wing extremists since 2014 has been greater than attacks from Islamic ex-

tremists. Right-wing terrorism commonly refers to the use or threat of violence by sub-national or non-state entities whose goals may include racial, ethnic, or religious supremacy; opposition to government authority; and the end of practices like abortion. Left-wing terrorism, on the other hand, referred to the use or threat of violence by sub-national or non-state entities that oppose capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism; focus on environmental or animal rights issues; espouse pro-communist or pro-socialist beliefs; or support a decentralized sociopolitical system like anarchism. Particular in the United States, the number of such attacks was five or less per year. They then rose to 14 in 2012; continued at a similar level between 2012 and 2016, with a mean of 11 attacks and a median of 13 attacks; and then jumped to

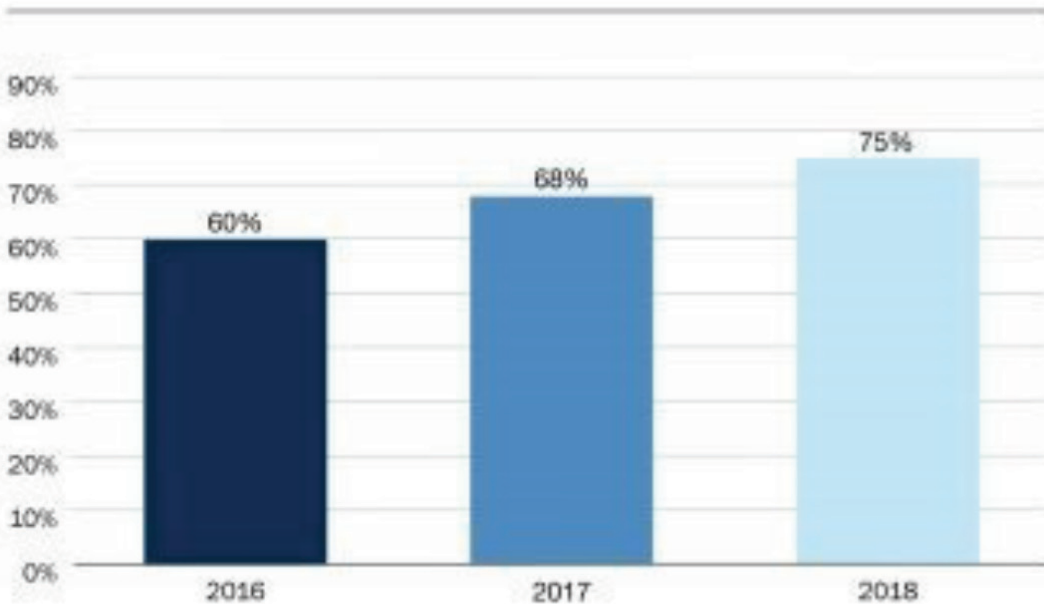


31 in 2017. Most of the far-right attacks involved firearms or incendiary devices, which included setting fire to targets like mosques. The perpetrators attacked religious figures and institutions, primarily Muslim or Jewish targets (31 percent); private citizens and property (29 percent); and U.S. or foreign government targets in the United States, such as the Forsyth County Courthouse in Georgia or the Mexican consulate in Austin, Texas (14 percent). The perpetrators were mostly white supremacists.<sup>15</sup>

According to a report released in December 2018, far-right extremism was on the rise while there was decline of death tolls caused by terrorism. The 2018 Global Terrorism Index found that deaths resulting from terrorism decreased 27% worldwide in 2017. Ninety-six of the 163 countries tracked by the index saw an improve-

ment; 46 had declined. Sixty-seven countries had at least one death from terrorism in 2017 -- a drop from 2016's record high rate of 79 countries. The report was produced by the Institute for Economics & Peace, who said there was a sharp decrease (52%) in deaths from terrorist attacks attributed to ISIS. Syria and Iraq, saw the most dramatic declines in numbers of deaths due to terrorism. Iraq saw 5,000 fewer deaths and Syria saw 1,000 fewer. Europe saw its deaths by terrorism drop by 75% in 2017, a number that Institute for Economics & Peace called 'absolutely dramatic'. Meanwhile, the report found that far-right terrorism was on the rise in Western Europe and the United States, calling it 'a growing concern'. The report stated: "In the four years between 2013 and 2017, there were 66 deaths and 127 attacks caused

### Muslim Voter Registration Climbs



**FIGURE 4:** Are you registered to vote at your present address or not? (% Yes shown) Base: Total respondents who can legally vote in the United States



in Western Europe and North America by far-right groups and individuals". The index identified 31 far-right extremist attacks and 17 deaths associated with them. These included the fatal stabbing of two people in Portland, Oregon, in May 2017 by a man shouting slurs at two African-American teenagers and the January 2017 Quebec mosque attack that left six dead. The report found: "The majority of attacks were carried out by lone actors with far-right, white nationalist, or anti-Muslim beliefs." The reporting on the increase in far-right attacks echoed the jump in hate crime reports in the US and Canada. The FBI said in November 2018 that reported hate crimes had jumped 17% in 2017 from the year prior. Canada saw an almost 50% jump in hate crimes in 2017, according to a federal government report published in November 2018.<sup>16</sup>

Nevertheless, in term of positive impact to the political behavior, Islamophobia was driving more U.S. Muslims to become politically engaged. An annual poll by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU) intended to measure the level of anti-Muslim sentiment among the American public, and the report included an Islamophobia Index, created by ISPU in collaboration with Georgetown's the Bridge Initiative. According to the index, 61% report having experienced religiously based discrimination in the past year more than once. That's compared to less than 30% of all other religious groups and the general public as a whole. The index measured sentiment ranging from 0 – the lowest level of prejudice – to 100. It posited various anti-Muslim stereotypes to people of different religions in the U.S., as well as to those who were not religious, and



asked whether they agreed with the statement. Unsurprisingly, the survey found that Muslims expressed one of the lowest levels of Islamophobia. However, people who were not affiliated with any religion had the lowest levels, suggesting that some Muslims might have begun to internalize others' perceptions. White evangelicals expressed some of the highest levels of Islamophobia. For instance, when presented with the statement "Most Muslims Living in the United States are more prone to violence", 13% of the general public agreed. Only 8% of the non-affiliated agreed, while 18% of Muslims did. Almost a quarter of white evangelicals – 23% – agreed. Almost a quarter of white evangelicals also believed that "Muslims are hostile to the United States". Only 12% of Muslims thought so, 13% of Jews, 6% of Protestants, 4% of Catholics and only 1% of the non-affiliated. The index found that, the high-





er the belief in the stereotype, the greater the support for freedom-reducing measures. For instance, higher scores on the Islamophobia Index were associated with more acceptance of targeting civilians by the military, or by small groups; greater agreement with limiting both press freedoms and institutional checks following a hypothetical terror attack, and greater support for the so-called “Muslim ban”, the surveillance of American mosques, and banning new mosques altogether. According to the report accompanying the index, Muslims were becoming more politically engaged. This could be because they were less satisfied with the direction their country was going in. Only 29% said they were happy with the way the US was going, compared to 41% in 2017 and 63% in 2016. More than 90 American Muslims, nearly all of them Democrats, were running for public office across the country this year.

Among them Democrat Rashida Tlaib, who, if elected, would be the first Muslim woman ever to sit in Congress. Meanwhile, more and more Muslims were registering to vote. In 2016, 60% were registered to vote. Two years later, that number had reached 75%. According to Pew Research, half of Muslim Americans said it had become harder to be Muslim in the US in recent years. And 48% said they had experienced at least one incident of discrimination in the past 12 months. However, 55% said the American people, as a whole, were friendly towards them, and an additional three in 10 said the American people were neutral. Just 14% said Americans were unfriendly. In addition, about half of US Muslims (49%) said that, in the past year, someone had expressed support for them because they were Muslim.<sup>17</sup>

Meanwhile in northern part of American continent (Canada), a poll showed that hate crimes rose by 47 percent since 2017, with incidents targeting Muslim, Jewish and black people accounting for most of the increase, according to recently released figures released in November 2018 by the Canada’s statistical agency. The report said that Law enforcement agencies reported that 2,073 hate crimes occurred in 2017, up from 1,409 in 2016; and it was the highest increase since comparable data first became available in 2009. It was said, the biggest jump was in crimes against Muslims; while hate crimes targeting religious groups overall accounted for 41 percent of all hate crimes in Canada in 2017. An instance mentioned the deadly incident in Quebec City, when a man opened fire in a mosque in January 2017, killing six people and injuring 19 others.<sup>18</sup>



## 2.1.2. Islamophobic Discourses and Campaigns in the U.S. and Canada



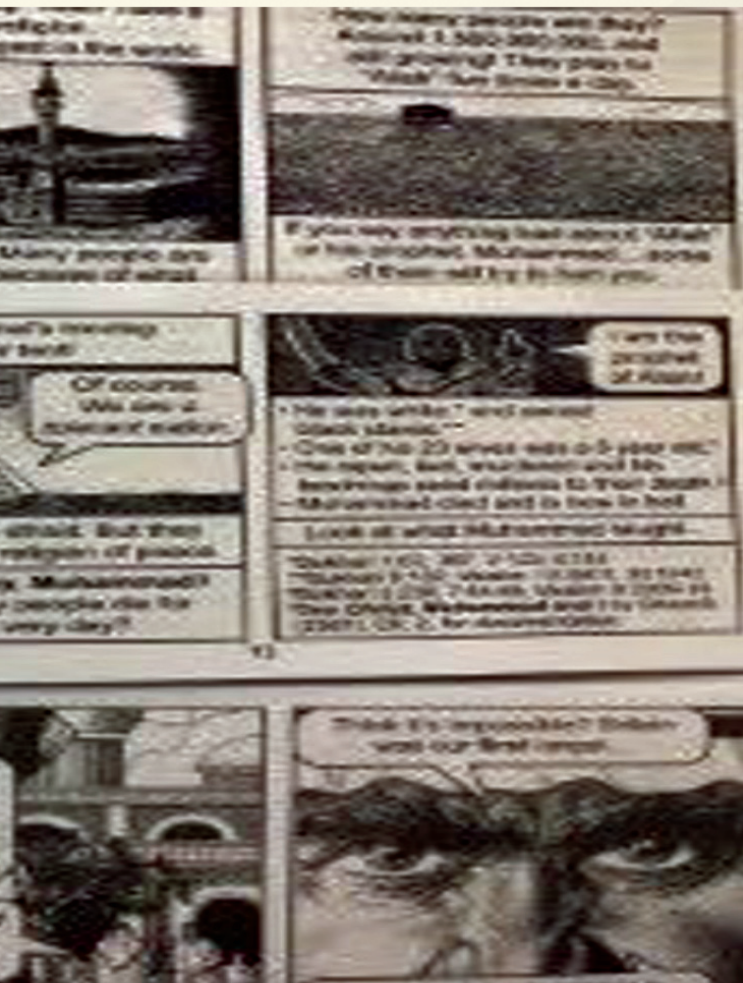
***“If you say anything bad about ‘Allah’ or his prophet, Muhammad...some of them will try to hurt you.”***

An envelope addressed to the UNC Muslim Students Association in September 2018, containing a collection of small comic booklets espousing several negative stereotypes about Muslims. The comics included angry imagery of camels and Muslims, as well as warnings about Islam’s invasion into Western countries. One cartoon read, “If you say anything bad about ‘Allah’ or his prophet, Muhammad...some of them will try to hurt you.” Another car-

toon strip read, “Here’s how they invade today. First, they’re peaceful, until they gain power — then look out! England is losing control and is closer to accepting Sharia law.” MSA publicity chairperson Malak Harb said: “For us to receive things like that, it kind of makes us stop for a second and realize, you know what, there are people who see us as less than.

They try to make it very clear to us that we are not like everyone else. It’s definitely an eye-opener because we go about our lives as any other student on this campus.”<sup>19</sup>





### “F\*\*king Arab people...Terrorists.”

Mohammed Abu Marzouk remained in intensive care in a Toronto hospital after a horrific beating that police confirmed in July 2018 was being investigated as a anti-Muslim hate crime. The Muslim man was in his vehicle with his family and about to return home from a picnic near a community center in Mississauga, outside of Toronto, when two men walking by shouted an obscenity “f—king Arab people” “terrorists.” The pair began kicking the car hence Mr Marzouk got out and was attacked. His wife Diana

Attar begged for them to stop then spotted a police car and ran to it for help. When she returned, her husband was lying on the ground, bleeding profusely from his ear. At first, police designed the beating as resulting from road rage, but upon further investigation authorities changed the incident to a hate crime. Ibrahim Hindy, imam of the Dar At-Tawheed mosque said: “They were calling them Arab terrorists, so clearly their religion, their ethnicity was playing a part in that.” Hindy pointed out that hate crimes reported to police in Mississauga substantially increased.

There were 158 cases in 2017, up from 59 in 2016. Of those, the highest number, 57, were directed toward Muslims.<sup>20</sup>

### “F\*\*k you, F\*\*k all Muslims.”

A teenage girl in Halifax felt frozen with fear when a man yelled anti-Muslim insults at her in July 2018 on a downtown street. The teenager who wore a hijab said she was walking near Spring Garden Rd. and Queen St. in Halifax when a man confronted her and shouted Islamophobic remarks. Halifax Regional Police confirmed that a report was filed about the confrontation. She said when she left class and walked alone towards the bus. She was near the Halifax Central Library when she noticed a man trying to get her attention. She said: “A guy was in my face and he looked like he was yelling, so I took my headphones out and said, ‘Excuse me?’ So he just turned around again and said, “F— you, f— all Muslims.” She said he also told her to go back to her home country. The girl said there were plenty of people on





the busy street who walked by as the incident was happening. She said people looked on in surprise, but no one intervened.<sup>21</sup>

### **“Islam is Satanic”**

Republican candidate in North Carolina’s 9th Congressional District, former Southern Baptist minister Mark Harris, thought that Jews and Muslims need to accept Jesus Christ for peace to happen between Israelis and Palestinians, and that Islam was part of a “satanic trinity.” Harris delivered some disturbing statements in sermons over the years. In a 2014 sermon, Harris showed a video that claimed European and American cultures were threatened by Muslim immigrants and fertility rates. After showing the video, Harris asked his congregants: “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” In a November 2010 sermon, Harris discussed the Bible’s Book of Revelation and related its dark prose about the

devil to Islam and modern events. He said: “There is a satanic trinity of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. Satan is always a counterfeit. Listen to me, that is why the religion of Islam is so dangerous. It is the great counterfeit of our generation.” In another sermon the same year, Harris said countries under Islamic rule “bow down to the image of the Beast.” As a pastor for more than 30 years, Harris had plenty of material to examine to determine his fitness for political office. In addition to his hatred of Islam, Harris also was a misogynist and a homophobe.<sup>22</sup>

### **“Those (Muslims) Motherf\*\*kers are dead meat”**

Leaked audio revealed that members of an anti-Muslim militia talked about attacking people outside a Houston Islamic convention in September 2018. On the first weekend of September, prominent American Muslims gathered





in Houston for the 55th annual Islamic Society of North America convention. But outside the city's George R. Brown Convention Center, another gathering was growing. Several dozen armed members of the far-right 'Texas Patriot Network-TPN' and 'Soldiers of Odin' vigilante groups who opposed the conference squared off against counter-protesters, who showed up to protect the Muslim conference attendees. TPN claimed not to be a hate group or a militia, but leaked audio revealed TPN members fantasizing about violently attacking their rivals. An extended version of the conversation also revealed the militia boasting of its alleged ties with law enforcement. Leaked audio from a chat app the group used revealed that they tracked counter-protesters from their cars and discussed attacking them when police weren't watching. One TPN member was quoted saying: "Those motherfuckers are dead meat

when they come out of that damn fence. I want this guy. This antifa-lookin' kid. I want him more than Red Dave, but I got three cops right here."<sup>23</sup>

### **(Mocking) "Islamophobe Racist Bigot" and "Islam has nothing to do with it"**

Some households in western Massachusetts received an anonymously written Islamophobic mailer attacking Tahirah Amatul-Wadud, who was running for Congress in the state's 1st Congressional District. Amatul-Wadud, a practicing Muslim from Springfield who as an attorney had a record of civil rights advocacy and fighting against Islamophobia, had spoken out against the flyers, which were reportedly mailed to voters in a handful of cities and towns in the district over the past 10 days. Amatul-Wadud was running a progressive challenge to 30-year incumbent Richard Neal, the ranking Democrat on the powerful Ways and Means





Committee. Democrats would go to the polls to decide between the two candidates later in the month after, in a district that includes Easthampton, South Hadley, Southampton and hilltowns in Hampshire County, along with all of Hampden and Berkshire counties and part of Franklin County. The flyer made claims about Amatul-Wadud's religion on one side of the mailer, and questioned her role on the board of the Massachusetts chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations. The other side featured a hand-drawn picture of Amatul-Wadud holding a sign that says "Islamophobe Racist Bigot" and "Islam has nothing to do with it," with speech bubbled that said "rural high-speed internet" and "Elect me to represent you in Congress."<sup>24</sup>

**"Muhammed, p\*\*ss be upon him."**

A Muslim family's home in Homer Glen was

vandalized with Islamophobic graffiti in September 2018. The vandalism involved spraying an anti-Muslim message and crosses on the sidewalk and in front of the house, as well as spraying black paint over the brake lights of the family's car in the driveway. The sidewalk message read, "Muhammed, p\*\*s be upon him." the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR) Chicago said when Muslims refer to Muhammad, they add the phrase 'peace be upon him'. CAIR-Chicago Executive Director Ahmed Rehab said in a release: "These kinds of cowardly attacks are designed to do one thing: make people feel unwelcome and unsafe, even in the sanctity of their own homes, for no other reason than their personal choice of faith. As such, these types of attacks are antithetical to our constitutional values, to the spirit of our freedoms and to common decency, they must always be met with zero tolerance."<sup>25</sup>



### 2.1.3. Far-Rights and populism in the U.S.



Donald Trump had been widely seen as an icon of the “far right” in the U.S., and his ascension to the presidency has left Muslims living in the U.S. with deep concerns. Since very early, Mr. Trump had stood in opposition to Islam and Muslims, a position clearly shown in his political campaign. He embraced the hateful language of Quran-burning rallies and anti-mosque protests. A huge number of Islamophobic and racist harassment and intimidation incidents were reported in times following his election as President. After declaring that “Islam hates Americans,” Mr. Trump proposed banning Muslims from entering the country and heightened surveillance of mosques across the nation, causing a wide controversy during

the latest two years period.

By now, precisely in June 2018, the Supreme Court of the United States upheld Donald Trump’s decision to institute a ban on immigrants, refugees, and visa holders from five majority-Muslim countries. The “travel ban” — a term that sanitized what was in fact a Muslim ban — was the latest in a series of policies that had targeted Muslims inaccurately seen as agents, or agents-in-waiting, of a dangerous foreign ‘ideology’ that needed to be eradicated. These anti-Muslim narratives were sponsored by industry, pushing rhetoric like the takeover of sharia law in America through think tanks like the Center for Security Policy that provided fod-





der for conservative commentators like Newt Gingrich. This served as another evidence that Islamophobia was not simply interpersonal hatred or fear, but was a system of bigotry that identified and targeted those who were Muslim or perceived to be Muslim, no matter what their race or country of national origin. If all Muslims were potential terrorists, then, the argument went on, the U.S. must be allowed to spy on 'them' to keep 'us' safe. The US government had tapped phone lines and other forms of communication and sent informants into Muslim student groups and mosques, and added 'suspicious' Muslims to no-fly lists. They created the Countering Violent Extremism programs that asked teachers and medical professionals to report to the government any American Muslim teenagers they encountered who were sullen, withdrawn, or exploring their identity with regards to faith.<sup>26</sup>

Donald Trump's travel ban, recently upheld by the Supreme Court, was wreaking havoc

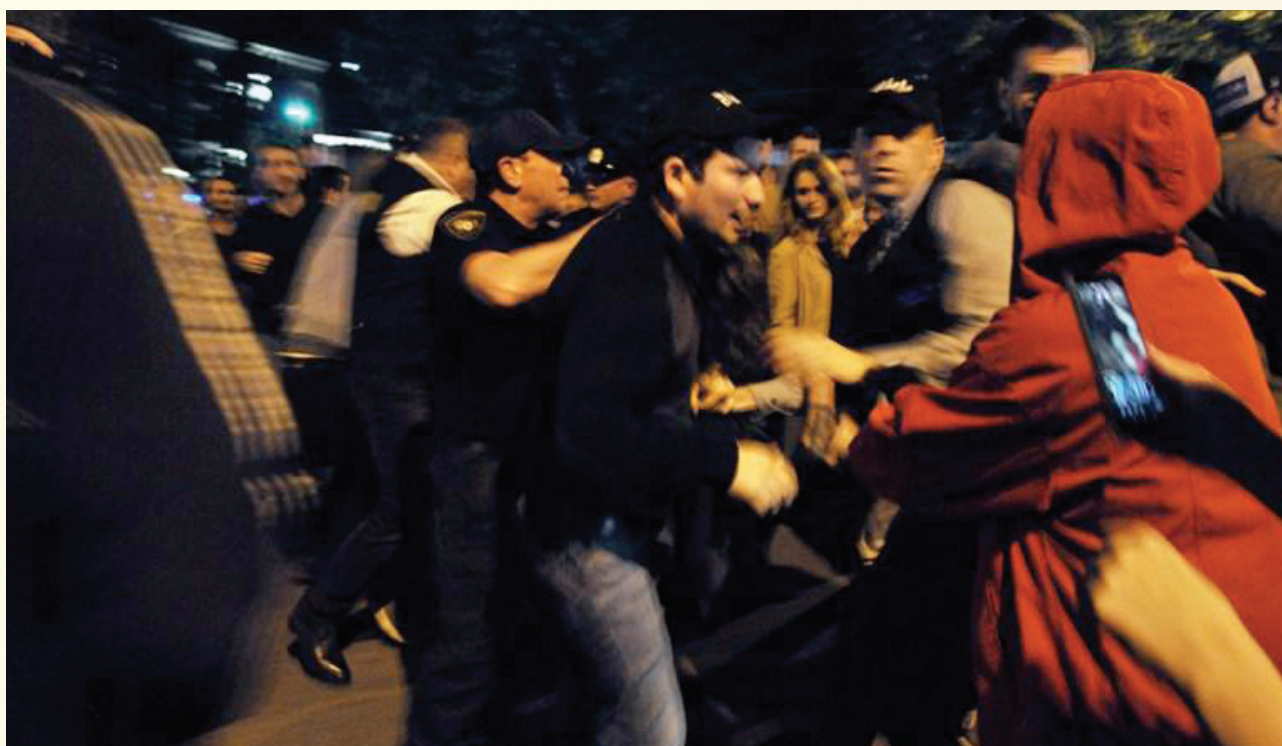
on Muslim families, forcing some Americans to leave the United States for countries in the midst of devastating wars in order to reunite with loved ones. The resilience of the travel ban was emblematic of how enshrined Islamophobia had become in American culture. Even the American highest court of justice had endorsed a discriminatory law rooted in misconceptions about the instability, oppression and violence of the Middle East and Islamic faith. Most Americans' exposure to the Middle East and Islam started with what they learn in high school history class. World history textbooks in the United States only allocated 3 percent of space to discussions of these topics. And the story those textbooks told in that limited space was a disturbing one. World history textbooks used across the country found that sections about Islam and the Middle East advance a "rise and fall" narrative. That story said: "In the medieval period, the Middle East was a flourishing and advanced civilization, but due to an



inability to modernize, the region has subsequently declined into chaos, oppression and violence.” This sensationalized version of history reduced the region to a bygone society and failed to account for the vibrant and dynamic contemporary reality of the Middle East. American history textbooks similarly tended to degrade Arabs and Muslims by situating them as foreign and antithetical to the American national narrative. While Arabs and Muslims had been integral members of the United States since before the country’s inception, American history textbooks stripped U.S. history of its Arab and Muslim influences. These textbooks failed to acknowledge the significant contributions of Arab and Muslim Americans to all aspects of American life, from sports to technology to government. Students did not learn that there would be no Apple iPhones or Macbooks without the genius and innovation of an Arab American, Steve Jobs. Students were not taught that Muhammad Ali was motivated by his Muslim

faith to dedicate his life to social justice and civil rights. In failing to tell this part of the American story, these educational materials constructed a national identity that alienates Arab and Muslim Americans. Instead, both world history and U.S. history textbooks portrayed Arabs and Muslims as the undemocratic and tyrannical people that the United States strives to defeat in order to secure democracy and peace throughout the world. Melissa Levinson of New York University Abu Dhabi said: “They told stories about the ever-volatile Middle Eastern pot that continued to boil ominously, describing Iranian hostage takers as a howling mob of rabidly anti-American Muslim militants. This framing leads students to view the Middle East as a tempestuous, threatening and mysterious region in a constant state of turbulence.”<sup>27</sup>

The story of growing far right ‘nightmare’ in the U.S. does not seem to halt until today. President Donald Trump announced in a tweet in December 2018 that State Department







spokeswoman Heather Nauert would replace Nikki Haley as the newest United States ambassador to the United Nations. Haley announced her resignation in October after serving less than a year in the role. Nauert, a former Fox News host with no foreign policy experience, had something in common with many of her peers in the Trump administration: a history of spreading anti-Muslim and Islamophobic comments. She mocked Muslims in a 2016 tweet that linked to a New York Times story about Muslims' concerns over then-presidential candidate Trump. "They should meet ISIS," she wrote. She also tweeted links to [jihadwatch.org](http://jihadwatch.org), an anti-Muslim hate site run by Robert Spencer, a prominent anti-Muslim activist who was banned from the United Kingdom for his Islamophobic and racist rhetoric. Nauert's relationship with Spencer dates back to 2009, when she hosted him and fellow anti-Muslim activists Frank Gaffney, Tarek Fatah and Nonie Darwish to discuss an hour-long segment on

'stealth jihad'. The Southern Poverty Law Center had labeled Gaffney "America's most notorious Islamophobe" and his organization as a hate group. Similarly, the SPLC called Darwish "a staple of the anti-Islam right." Fatah was a Canada-based columnist and self-proclaimed Muslim reformer who had been criticized for spreading anti-Muslim conspiracy theories and had called for a ban on the face veils. In 2013, Nauert hysterically claimed that "sharia law is now changing everything" after a Minnesota YMCA announced it would host a private swim class for Muslim girls to accommodate their religious clothing requirement. Yet she wasn't the only high-level U.S. government employee with a history of Islamophobia. Current Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had a documented history of spewing Islamophobic comments and had been associated with hate groups. John Bolton, Trump's national security adviser, was another high-ranking White House official with ties to anti-Muslim hate groups.<sup>28</sup>



## 2.2. Islamophobia in Europe

### 2.2.1. Polls and Reports



Anti-Islam sentiments had bolstered almost everywhere across Europe, where significant reordering of the political landscape has been taking place since the last few years. This situation was quite predictable, as countries in this region have been struggling with serious debt issues and high level of unemployment since the economic crisis hit in 2008. Such a circumstances in turn led to domestic debates about hot issues such as immigrants, non-European foreigners, assimilation and integration, national identity etc., which was worsened by the surge of refugees fleeing the civil war in some Muslim countries, as well as 'periodic' terrorist attacks hitting the continent. These ingredients, altogether, has been creating the necessary environment for right-wing parties and figures to prosper, in parallel with the European Union's policies of integration of which been blamed for the situation. As the consequences, anti-EU, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim platforms

have gained a fertile ground, soaring Islamophobia highly across Europe, as indicated by the following polls and analysis:

A media analysis suggested a Euroskeptic bloc might grow by 60 percent in the Sweden Parliament. That would leave those who were hostile to deeper EU integration with around a fifth of the legislature, not enough to push any big changes but enough to challenge the established parties and crack open internal divisions soon after Britain left the bloc in March 2019. The analysis was based on the latest polls by reputable agencies in the EU's 27 remaining states, or actual national election results in those countries which had held an election more recently than the previous poll. Most of the polls asked people how they would vote in a hypothetical national election. Most countries used proportional representation in EU elections, making translating vote share into seats relatively simple. Voting by re-





gions in Italy and Ireland where opinion polls offer only national data complicates that process and so the seat count analysis makes some further assumptions. The data indicated a clear strengthening for movements beyond the mainstream at a time in which Steve Bannon had launched a project to push the anti-EU vote across the Union. The current popularity of the anti-establishment parties in Italy's new coalition, 5-Star and The League, boosted the possibility their current blocs in Brussels would increase in strength. Their ratings, and the rise of Alternative for Germany, more than offset the loss to the anti-EU camp of the UK Independence Party, whose 19 members would leave along with Britain, leaving a smaller chamber. Polls suggested the EFDD grouping, dominated by UKIP and 5-Star, could grow to 58 from 45 seats if alignments were unchanged. The

ENF grouping, which includes Marine Le Pen's French National Rally and Geert Wilders' Dutch Freedom Party, could nearly double to 62 seats from 35, due in part to the surge in popularity of The League in Italy. That would take the two right-wing groupings' combined total to 119 seats from 78 and their share to 16.9 percent from 10.4 percent, as the total number of seats falls to 705 from 751. Other parties could shift to more overtly Euroskeptic positions. These might include members of the ECR, set up by Britain's ruling Conservatives as a Euroskeptic alternative to the main center-right EPP and which will now lose British seats. Poland's ruling Law and Justice Party could seek a new home outside the ECR. But like Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban whose Fidesz party was a controversial member of the EPP, they did not share some hardliners' goal of breaking





up the EU altogether. Elsewhere on the political spectrum, the collapse in elections in 2017 of the traditional left and right in France suggested a potential boost for the European Parliament's centrist bloc ALDE – should President Emmanuel Macron's new movement aligns with it -- and for the somewhat lost alliance on the far left known in Brussels as GUE. The polling analysis suggested the EPP, including German Chancellor Angela Merkel's Christian Democrats, would remain the biggest group. It would shrink to 186 seats from 219 in the smaller chamber but would hold its lead over the center-left S&D.<sup>29</sup>

In France, hostilities against Muslims had increased, including shootings, sexual assaults, arson and the desecration of places of worship during the holy month of Ramadan, as was stated by France National Observatory Against

Islamophobia. Speaking to Algeria's APS news agency, Abdallah Zakri explained that attacks against Muslims increased by 15 per cent in the period from 1 January to 31 March 2018. According to the report, as many as 30 hostile acts against the Muslim community had been recorded during that period compared to 26 attacks in the same period in 2017. Meanwhile threats against Muslims increased by 138 per cent in the period between 1 January and 31 March 2018 compared to the same period the year before.<sup>30</sup>

Anti-Muslim sentiment had been also on the rise in Germany, home to more people of Turkish origin than any country outside Turkey, according to a new study from the Leipzig-based Competence Center for Right-Wing Extremism and Democracy Research. More than 44 percent of those surveyed believed





Muslims should be banned from immigrating to Germany, up from 36.5 percent four years ago. And nearly 56 percent agreed that the number of Muslims in Germany made them feel like strangers in their own country, up from 43 percent in 2014. Professor Elmar Braehler, who conducted the research, believed these views were fueling the surge of the far-right party Alternative for Germany (AfD), which played up fears of Islamization. Germany had the second-largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France. Among the country's nearly 4.7 million Muslims, around 3 million are of Turkish origin. However, Germany seemed not to be witnessing a return to conservative nationalist views. For instance, LGBT acceptance was on the rise, even as Muslims were viewed with greater suspicion. Perhaps this was because xenophobia had become com-

monplace across Europe. In 2017, Hungary, Poland, Italy, Slovakia, France, Britain, and Germany all recorded peak prejudicial attitudes toward outsiders, be they Muslims, Roma, or Jews, while related hate crimes also spiked.<sup>31</sup> A new poll showed that the AfD had been overtaking the center-left Social Democrats (SPD) to pull into second place ahead of a crucial regional election in Bavaria. The surge follows anti-immigrant demonstrations in September 2018 in the city of Chemnitz, where about 6,000 people marched after a German national was killed, allegedly by two refugees. SPD was currently in coalition with Angela Merkel's center-right Central Democratic Union (CDU), making AfD the largest opposition party. The rise of the AfD contributed to an immigration standoff that threatened to bring down Merkel's government.<sup>32</sup>





Meanwhile, a quarter of British voters would consider backing a new far-right anti-Islam party, according to a poll released in July 2018, in a sign of voters shifting to the extremes of politics amid discontent over the government's Brexit strategy. After a chaotic that had seen senior ministers quitted her government and rebellions from both wings of the ruling party, premier Theresa May faced further pressure after a poll for The Sunday Times showed that the public was also deeply opposed to her strategy. The public believed that Boris Johnson – the former foreign secretary who quit – was better placed to lead his party and negotiations with Brussels with time running out on securing a deal, according to the YouGov poll. The Media reported that 34 per cent of voters believed Mr Johnson would negotiate Brexit well compared to only 16 per cent for Mrs May. The

poll of 1,668 adults found that 24 per cent of voters would back a party on the political far-right committed to “opposing Islamism and immigration and supporting Brexit”. It came as former Trump adviser Steve Bannon and pro-Brexit campaigner Nigel Farage discussed plans to form a new right-wing movement to take advantage of the government's problems.<sup>33</sup>

Media reported that incidence of religious hate crime across England and Wales spiked a whopping 40 per cent over 2017 to 2018. Over half of the religiously-motivated attacks targeted Muslims, according to the statistics. Police recorded 94,098 hate crime instances over the mentioned time frame, motivated attacks targeted Muslims. Anti-Antisemitic offences followed, according to the authority, or more than double the total five years earlier.





The Home Office Statistic document read: "This increase is thought to be largely driven by improvements in police recording, although there have been spikes in hate crime following certain events such as the EU referendum and the terrorist attacks in 2017. It is thought that the sharp increase in religious hate crimes is due to a rise in these offences following the terrorist attacks in 2017." The numbers were released in October 2018, a day after the government announced to review current laws regarding such offences. Home Affairs Committee Chair Yvette Cooper said: "Hate crime can be devastating for victims, deeply divisive for communities, and dangerously linked to extremism ... it is very damaging both for those who are targeted by appalling violence or abuse and for entire communities too."<sup>34</sup>

In different part of the continent, a total of

335 incidents of hate crimes by far-right extremists were reported during the first half of 2018 in Austria, the country's authorities revealed in September 2018. The Austrian Interior Ministry's official described 95 of the incidents as racist, 29 as anti-Semitic and 9 as Islamophobic during a parliamentary hearing. Responding to the questions by main opposition Social Democratic Party's (SPO) spokeswoman Sabine Schatz, the ministry official told parliament that 409 crimes had been committed in violation of Austria's 1947 legislation against the spread of Nazism. Noting that the past three years had seen a rise in the far-right extremism, the SPO spokeswoman said that it was particularly prevalent in the state of Upper Austria, with anti-Semitic acts increasing in Lower Austria. According to a data published by the Interior Ministry, 660 incidents, including 227 racist, 39 anti-Semitic and 26 Islamophobic incidents took place in 2017.<sup>35</sup>



## 2.2.2. Islamophobic Discourses and Campaigns



### **(Muslims are) “Not Welcome” in Germany**

A mosque in the northwestern German city of Gladbeck was vandalized by suspected Neo-Nazis. The attackers wrote racist slogans and drew swastikas on the windows and the walls of the mosque, run by the Turkish-Islamic Union for Religious Affairs (DITIB). Head of the DITIB’s Gladbeck branch, condemned the attack and urged the police to bring the perpetrators to justice. The DITIB runs more than 900 mosques across the country of over 81 million people, which have the second-largest Muslim population in Western Europe, after France. Among the country’s nearly 4.7 million Muslims, 3 million are of Turkish origin. In recent years the country had seen growing Islamophobia and hatred of migrants triggered by propaganda from far-right and populist parties.<sup>36</sup>

### **“Allahuakber will echo through the skies of Karlskrona**

### **in the same way Islamists shout it when blowing themselves up.”**

Prosecutors were investigating a top city official in southern Sweden over Islamophobic remarks. Christopher Larsson, vice mayor of the southern Karlskrona, was accused of committing a hate crime in a social media posting in 2017, arguing that Karlskrona should not allow the adhan, or Muslim call to prayer, to be broadcast over speakers, Larsson wrote: “Allahuakber will echo through the skies of Karlskrona in the same way Islamists shout it when blowing themselves up.” Magnus Manhammar, a Social Democratic Party MP, filed the criminal complaint against Larsson, and local daily Blekinge Lans reported that the regional prosecutor’s office began an investigation.



Larsson was a member of the conservative Swedish Democrats.<sup>37</sup>

**“Against mass immigration? Want to protect free speech? Love your English identity!”**

Racist posters containing strong anti-Islamic images had been spotted at Manchester University. The poster showed images of women in Burqas and protestors from far right group, Generation Identity. Over the images were superimposed a series of questions: “Against mass immigration? Want to protect free speech? Love your English identity!” Generation Identity was a movement that fought for concept involving ethnical segregation. ‘Stand Up to Racism’, an organisation that campaigned against all forms of racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism, immediately published a tweet denouncing a racist poster found in the Students’ Union. Further tweets showed the same poster had been seen at multiple spots around campus. ‘Stand up to Racism’ and Manchester students announced plans to protest against Generation Identity on campus.<sup>38</sup>

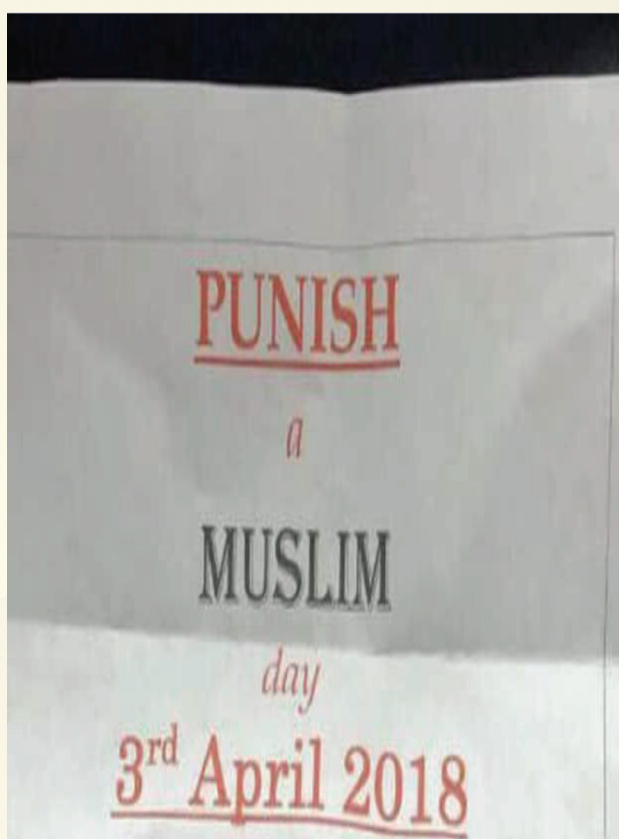
**“Islam is the Problem”**

Boris Johnson was reported to the Equalities Commission after comparing Muslim women who wear Burqas to ‘letter boxes’ and bank robbers. The former foreign secretary wrote in an article for the Telegraph in August 2018 that “it is absolutely ridiculous that people should choose to go around looking like letter boxes,” adding that any female student who appeared at school or in a lecture “looking like a bank robber” should be asked to remove it. It was not



the first time that Johnson has pushed Islamophobic tropes. In 2005, Johnson wrote in the Spectator that he believed it was only natural for the public to be scared of Islam. He wrote: “To any non-Muslim reader of the Koran, Islamophobia seems a natural reaction, and, indeed, exactly what that text is intended to provoke. Judged purely on its scripture — to say nothing of what is preached in the mosques — it is the most viciously sectarian of all religions in its heartlessness towards unbelievers. Islam is the problem.” In the wake of the London bombings, he also questioned the loyalty of British Muslims and insisted that the country must accept that “Islam is the problem. He wrote: “It will take a huge effort of courage and skill to win round the many thousands of British Muslims who are in a similar state of alienation, and to make them see that their faith must be compat-





ible with British values and with loyalty to Britain. That means disposing of the first taboo, and accepting that the problem is Islam. Islam is the problem.”<sup>39</sup>

### “Punish A Muslim Day”

A British man had pleaded guilty to creating a racist letter campaign that called for violence against Muslims and ethnic minorities. David Parnham, a 35-year-old from central England, admitted that he sent “Punish a Muslim Day” letters that designated April 3 as a day to terrorize British Muslims. The letters assigned various points to specific acts of violence — from 25 points for pulling Muslim women’s heads-carves to 1,000 points for bombing a mosque. Parnham pleaded guilty in London in October 2018 to 15 offenses, including soliciting murder and staging a bomb hoax. He faced a potential life sentence, as Media reported. The “Punish a

Muslim Day” letters rattled British Muslim communities and sparked calls for extra vigilance on that day. The campaign also inspired acts of solidarity, with thousands of people on social media chiming in with hashtags such as #LoveAMuslimDay and #WeStandTogether.<sup>40</sup>

### “Share if you think Trump should ban Islam in American schools.”

A council member in northern Texas was rejecting calls for his resignation over a series of anti-Muslim and anti-black Facebook posts, including one saying that President Trump should ban Islam in US schools. Tom Harrison, a city council member in Plano, Texas, shared a post from a Facebook page titled “Joined Hands across America for Trump.” The meme, which showed a young girl wearing a hijab, read: “Share if you think Trump should ban Islam in American schools.” The post sparked a public outcry, with Plano Mayor Harry LaRosiliere calling for Harrison’s removal from the council and the council voting Sunday to publicly admonish Harrison. The council voted 7 to 1 to censure Harrison, which the mayor called “the only course of action available to the council.” He said that Harrison was the only dissenting vote.<sup>41</sup>

### “The Islamist Factory”

A study by Montaigne Institut, a Paris-based think tank, urged President Macron to support a levy on halal products, pilgrimages and donations. If the President accepted the recommendation, France would adopt a special ‘halal tax’. It aimed at fighting extremism and creating an independent new body for Europe’s largest Muslim population. The proposed tax would



be collected by Muslims themselves rather than the state. Mr Macron wanted to form a new body replacing French Muslim Council (CFCM), which the critics said failed to assert itself as an authoritative, fully representative voice. Mr Macron also wanted to stop overseas funding and the training of imams. In its report titled "The Islamist Factory", the Institut Montaigne also proposed that instead of being instructed in mosques, the Arabic language should be learnt in more state schools, following a national curriculum.<sup>42</sup>

**"Terror attacks were carried out by Muslims because of Islam."**

Michael Blackburn, who taught at Lincoln University, tweeted a series of Islamophobic and anti-feminist tweets. One said: "If the left hadn't told me the EDL were the real threat I would have carried on thinking it was machete-wielding, Koran-quoting Muslims." In another tweet, sent in June of 2012, Blackburn said: "Thank God all those papers going on about patriarchy and the oppression of women are out the way for another year." In 2017 the lecturer said: "I know the media haven't told us but I suspect these terror attacks were carried out by Muslims because of Islam." In response to the tweets, Lincoln University defended Blackburn on the grounds of freedom of speech, emphasizing they "recognize individuals' rights to hold different beliefs and views", and that the ability to "speak freely and to explore ideas is fundamental to the idea of a university." A University of Lincoln spokesperson said: "We cannot comment on complaints made against individual members of staff. As a University we





have a commitment to equality and diversity, and we treat each other with dignity and respect.”<sup>43</sup>

### **“Islam-free schools!”**

A smiling girl in a checked dress, right arm raised, led a group of light-skinned teenagers running joyfully down a school corridor. Underneath was the slogan: “Islam-free schools!” Condemned as a very dangerous allusion to Nazism, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party’s poster had raised the already heated political temperature as a crucial election in Bavaria looms. The AfD’s leader, Alexander Gauland, used an angry debate in the German parliament in September 2018 to accuse Chancellor

Angela Merkel of dividing the nation with her immigration policy. Merkel hit back, saying there was “no excuse for rabble-rousing”.<sup>44</sup>

### **(Because of Muslims) “This world is dangerous.”**

A bus driver had been disciplined after asking a Muslim woman to remove her face veil in telling passengers: “This world is dangerous.” The woman was with her two-month-old baby when the driver of a First service into Bristol city centre told her he did not know what she was capable of doing if he could not see her face. The woman told Bristol Live: “He said I was scary and I was dangerous, and he kept talking about it during the journey. I didn’t say





anything. He continued to insult me, and he made me out to be a terrorist, and kept saying everyone should see each other's faces. He asked why I was wearing a balaclava. He was insinuating I was going to bomb the bus." Mobile phone footage taken after the woman left the bus showed other passengers confronting the driver over the incident which happened in July 2018.<sup>45</sup>

### **"No Mosque, thanks"**

A mosque in northwestern Germany's Lower Saxony state was attacked in September 2018 by unidentified assailants who defaced the building with racist slogans and left pork products on the property. The attack on Selimiye Mosque, affiliated with the Turkish Islamic Union (DITİB), took place in the city of Nordenham. Delmenhorst police said the attackers used black paint to write racial slurs on the windows and that various foods made from pork were left there. Dozens of mosques had

been attacked in Germany in 2018, amid rising Islamophobia and increased activity by members of the PKK terror group in the country. Germany had a 3 Turkish community, many of whom were second- and third-generation German-born citizens of Turkish descent whose grandparents moved to the country during the 1960s.<sup>46</sup>

### **"Islamic extremism is actively fostered in HM Prisons at state expense"**

### **"Non-Islamic prisoners are converting for their own protection".**

In its 'interim manifesto' published before the annual party conference in September 2018, UKIP called for Muslim prisoners who promote extremism or try to convert non-Islamic prisoners to be held in separate jails. It claimed "Islamic extremism is actively fostered in HM Prisons at state expense" and "non-Islamic prisoners are converting for their own







protection”.<sup>47</sup>

### **“Germany would tighten control over foreign influence of its Muslim community”**

Germany would tighten control over foreign influence of its Muslim community, State Secretary for the Interior Ministry Markus Kerber said in September 2018, after a week of violent far-right clashes in eastern Germany. Kerber told media in an interview: “We have watched foreign forces dictate to German Muslims how to practice their religion for far too long, and because they also have their home here, we will now lend them more support in strengthening their self-confidence. We want to create more discussion formats for German Muslims. The minister will also actively encourage German Muslims to conduct a debate on a German Islam.” According to Kerber, that debate would take place within the so-called Islamkonferenz,

which Kerber set up as the interior ministry’s head of policy under Wolfgang Schäuble between 2006-2009 as a “forum for dialogue” on the relationship between Islam and the state.<sup>48</sup>

### **“Toblerone’s recent decision to get its products halal-certified was proof of Europe’s supposed Islamization”**

A far-right German politician’s anti-immigrant rhetoric unleashed a wave of fury against an unlikely foe — Toblerone, the Swiss chocolate bar. Jorg Meuthen, a senior member of the right-wing Alternative for Germany party (AfD), suggested on Facebook in December 2018 that Toblerone’s recent decision to get its products halal-certified was proof of Europe’s supposed ‘Islamization’. While sharing an article about the certification, Meuthen wrote sarcastically: “Islamization does not take place — neither in Germany nor in Europe,” It is therefore certainly pure coincidence that the depicted,





known chocolate variety is now certified as 'HALAL.' The AfD had become the main opposition force in German politics and was the first far-right group to enter the German parliament since 1945. It was known for its nationalist, anti-refugee stances and condemnation of multi-culturalism. Other chocolate brands, including Cadbury, Godiva, and Nestle, have also sought out halal certificates for certain products. It was a decision that makes sense from a business perspective, since globally, Islam is the fastest-growing major religion in the world.<sup>49</sup>

### **"Islam has no place in Britain"**

Jewish leaders had condemned a former South London Synagogue minister for saying "Islam has no place in Britain." Rabbi Lester said countries that have banned the burqa had done so for "good reason." He wrote: "I am among many who feel Islam has no place in

Europe and certainly not in Britain." He said the burka "represents the imposition of Muslim influence over their surroundings." He also wrote: "I disagree with Boris Johnson- the burka should be banned-but I agree with his attempt to lighten the atmosphere. The British were once known for their sense of humour and maybe the Jews also; only Islam is intolerant and has no sense of humour." Edie Friedman, executive director of the Jewish Council for Racial Equality said Rabbi Lester's comments were "so outrageous I didn't even think it came from a real person. It doesn't take much imagination to think how Jews would feel if the same was said about Judaism. Such coarsening of public discourse threatens the very social cohesion on which we all depend. We really need to take a step back and make sure we are able to discuss issues in an unemotional manner, free from bigotry." Geoffrey Harris, chairman of the South London Synagogue said Rabbi Les-





ter's views did not represent the Jewish community's views. Adrian Cohen, the chairman of the London Jewish Forum, said Mr Johnson's remarks "should be of grave concern" the Jewish community.<sup>50</sup>

**(Muslim full face veils are similar to)  
"Bank robbers and Letterboxes"**

**"No Muslims in government, police or  
army"**

"That's crazy to trust them. They are just waiting for the Jihad sign to turn on us"

Boris Johnson's official Facebook page had been host to hundreds of Islamophobic messages. An investigation into online abuse carried out by media uncovered calls to ban Islam, deport Muslims and vile attacks on London mayor Sadiq Khan. A source close to the former foreign secretary said he "totally condemns the hateful views posted by a small minority of respondents." Johnson was currently facing an

internal Conservative Party investigation for an article he wrote for The Daily Telegraph likening women who wear the Muslim full face veil to bank 'robbers' and 'letterboxes'. The posts on his Facebook page also included calls for "no Muslims in government, police or army". One was said to read: "That's crazy to trust them. They are just waiting for the Jihad sign to turn on us." Allies of the former foreign secretary indicated that his team had not censored comments on his Facebook page - including those attacking him - as he believed in free speech and that people should be able to contact their elected representatives easily. They pointed out that Facebook was responsible for moderating Facebook pages, with a staff of 15,000 to investigate and remove offensive postings. While Mr Johnson has yet to comment publicly on the furore over his Telegraph article, his supporters have made clear he did not accept his comments were Islamophobic and he would not be apologizing.<sup>51</sup>



### 2.2.3. Far-Rights



Far-right and populism were characterized by strident nationalism, anti-immigrant sentiment, economic resentments and a deep suspicion of international alliances and trade pacts — the condition that had been building across Europe for years. Now this European populist movements burst into full and furious view, driven by complex factors that vary widely from one country to the other — united by a broad sense of grievance against the political establishment and all it represents. At the time when elections took place in Europe's main political and economic powers i.e. Austria, Netherlands, France, and Germany, Populism has become increasingly prevalent, encouraging more and more Europeans to seek a solution from conservative options. Constituents were turning to conservative ideals in contrast to the formerly preferred liberalism, which was believed to have been provoked by issues i.e. migration crisis, Euro-scepticism, terrorist at-

tacks, economic dissatisfaction, and unemployment. Across Europe, right-wing parties became electorally successful, albeit sparing France and Netherlands. In Slovakia, People's Party, a Far-Right party campaigning against minority, immigrants, European Union (EU) and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), won significant percentage of the vote in parliamentary elections. The neo-fascist Golden Dawn, the third largest party in Greece, was extremely anti-immigrant and anti-euro. The Alternative for Germany (AfD), which started out as a protest movement against the euro currency, managed to attract anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim, anti-liberalization, and anti-European voters, and won 25 percent of the vote in the German state elections. Austria's Freedom Party, who campaigned on limiting benefits for immigrants and strengthening the country's border control, held 40 out of 183 seats in the National Council. Europe's most hardline anti-





immigrant Prime Minister, Viktor Orban, was the head of Fidesz Party, a national conservative political party in Hungary. Moreover, an anti-immigration, anti-EU, anti-LGBT, and economic protectionist party called “Jobbik” was currently the third-largest party in Hungary. In the Netherlands, leading in polls before the March 2017 Dutch parliamentary elections was Geert Wilders, frontrunner for the far-right anti-European Union, anti-Islam Party for Freedom. United Kingdom’s Prime Minister Theresa May was Eurosceptic and belonged to the right-wing Conservative Party. Also, the pro-Leave UK Independence Party (UKIP) led by Nigel Farage used the refugee crisis and immigration as main points of his campaign on Brexit. Lastly, the Sweden Democrats won 49 seats in parliament, which promotes heavy restriction on immigration and a referendum on EU membership. Studies confirmed that Populism had now surpassed liberalism in European politics. The

anti-establishment ideologies had apparently succeeded in taking over the desperate hearts of European voters who placed their faith in the hands of those who promise total change, despite the fact that authoritarian governments rarely existed in Europe since 1980s. Today, the trend showed European Union member states had a tendency to be led by anti-establishment governments, as we had recently witnessed the infamous Brexit in the U.K., as well as Geert Wilders’ Party for Freedom in the Netherlands and Marine Le Pen’s Front National in France were coming close to victory in their respective general elections. The signs were confirmed out by a study published by Swedish think tank TIMRBO and the European Policy Information Center, in a document so-called Authoritarian Populism Index 2017 indicating that conservatism and social democracy continued to be the first two ideological preferences by European voters, but authoritarian-populism had



now moved past liberalism and become the third choice. In addition, Populist parties feeling the support in Europe as one fifth of European voters, or 55.8 million people, casted a vote in favor of a populist party in the latest general elections. The report mentioned that while left-wing populism had emerged strongly in the last decade, right-wing populism witnessed a constant growth over the last 30 years and remained the favorite of the two.<sup>52</sup>

Far-right parties made big gains throughout Europe in recent years as anxieties grow over national identity and the effects of globalisation and immigration following armed conflict in the Middle East and North Africa. In such a circumstance, With immigration influx from countries like Syria to Europe, the momentum of xenophobia opposing to these immigrations was also accumulating. Sweden, widely regarded as the most progressive and tolerant country in the world, was embracing a Democrat party with neo-Nazi history with 18 percent of the vote. Sweden appeared to be heading towards a hung Parliament after a nationalist party with neo-Nazi roots made major gains in elections, robbing the mainstream centrist parties of a majority, in the latest vote to test a European nation's tolerance to immigration. Sweden had been known for its comparatively open doors to migrants and refugees, and the general election was the first since the country of 10 million took in 163,000 refugees in 2015 - the most in Europe in relation to the country's population of 10 million - as mass migration to Europe rose dramatically. The influx of asylum-seekers had polarised voters and fractured the long-standing political consensus. With almost all districts having reported, the ruling centre-left Social Democrats and Greens and their Left Party



parliamentary allies had 40.6 per cent of the vote, while the opposition centre-right Alliance was at 40.3 per cent. That gave the centre-left 144 seats in the 349-seat parliament against 142 for the Alliance, suggesting weeks of uncertainty before a workable government can be formed. The Sweden Democrats, a party with roots in the white supremacist fringe, won 17.6 per cent and 63 seats, up from 12.9 per cent and 49 seats in the last election four years ago, the biggest gain by any party in Sweden's Parliament, the Riksdag. Prime Minister Stefan Lofven, who brought the Social Democrats to power in 2014, said he intended to remain in the job. However, Alliance leader Ulf Kristersson called on him to resign and claimed the right to form Sweden's next government.<sup>53</sup> By now, the Sweden Democrats also increased their share in parliament, thousands took to the streets in East Germany chanting neo-Nazi slogans, and asylum seekers continued to be





refused entry into the European Union. Political scientist Jean-Yves Camus said that extreme parties were on the rise in Europe, and the rise in their popularity could not be attributed entirely to migrants and refugees. He viewed the trend as a wider movement that pit proponents of a multicultural society against those who oppose it. He said: “People are unhappy because they feel on the one hand that their country isn’t safe and on the other hand that their country is not their country. Cultural values seem to change so fast that part of the population, especially among the most deprived and the less educated, says that ‘this is not my country anymore’. Why? Because of immigration.”<sup>54</sup>

In September 2018, Sweden faced political deadlock after legislative elections whose result made it tough to form a functioning government. The prime minister was usually the leader of the party with the most votes, but

Sweden’s fragmented political landscape after the September’s vote made it impossible to predict who would build the next government, a process took weeks. Neither Social Democratic Prime Minister Stefan Lofven’s centre-left bloc nor the centre-right opposition garnered a majority. The far-right Sweden Democrats, with roots in the neo-Nazi movement, solidified their position as third-biggest party with 17.6 per cent, up almost five points from the previous election. Far-right parties had gained strength in several European countries, including Germany and Italy. Far-right leaders in Austria, Italy and France hailed the Sweden Democrats’ results.<sup>55</sup>

The Observatory was mostly concerned about Steve Bannon’s plan to start a populist revolution in Europe. Trump’s former consigliere had a new project, that he wanted to bring the entire European far right together to take down the EU — and he was founding an organization, called the Movement, to make it happen. Bannon told Media that the basic idea behind the Movement was to try to provide policy, polling, and strategic support for far-right parties across the continent in the run up to the May 2019 European Parliament elections. The goal was to turn the EU legislature, historically a consensus-minded body, into a battleground that the far right could use to undermine the coherence of the entire European project. Bannon had long dreamed of an international right-wing uprising against the “globalist” establishment. He saw the world in broadly ideological terms, positioning a pro-migration and pro-trade elite against a global middle class that believes deeply in the virtues of nationalism. He said in a 2014 interview: “We believe strongly that there was a global Tea





Party movement, I think you're seeing a global reaction to centralized government, whether that government is in Beijing or that government is in Washington, DC, or that government is in Brussels." Bannon saw Europe as a natural place to try to turn these dreams into reality. Right-wing populism was ascendant across

the continent. It gave Brexit and anti-migration leaders in countries like Austria, Italy, and Hungary. Nationalist parties in different countries hence theory have trouble cooperating — but they shared a common enemy in the European Union, which facilitated free movement of people across the continent. These parties could





benefit from more coordination in their anti-migration and anti-EU efforts. Bannon wanted everyone to think of him as a deep political thinker and a modern intellectual. But little that he had done, either inside the White House or outside, suggested he deserved that status.<sup>56</sup> Meanwhile, two far-right Norwegian politicians

had nominated Bannon's former Boss for the Nobel Peace Prize, lauding Trump's efforts to denuclearize North Korea. Christian Tybring-Gjedde and Per-Willy Amundsen, both belong to Norway's right-leaning Progressive Party, held anti-immigration and anti-Muslim views. Tybring-Gjedde had repeatedly criticized Islam, claiming that it hurt individual freedom. Amundsen pushed for stricter government control of mosques and sought to defund the Islamic Council Norway. Both were also known for their controversial views on immigration, which they claim was detrimental to Norway's culture and economy.<sup>57</sup>

Bannon was not just talking as he already started his campaign in Belgium, joined forces with the leader of a small populist party in Belgium to work with like-minded political parties in Europe mentioned earlier as "The Movement." Mischael Modrikamen, a Belgian who met Bannon through Nigel Farage, he said: "We are starting with Europe but aim to go global." Their alliance was based on principles like national sovereignty, secure borders, immigration controls and the battle against radical Islam. They hoped to link political parties with the same goals across the continent and offered expertise in polling analysis and other techniques that helped Trump to victory two years ago.<sup>58</sup>

Bannon also planned to work closely with the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban in the run-up to 2019's European Parliament elections. Bannon revealed that he had visited Budapest to speak to the far-right leader and his aides in meetings not previously made public. The political operative also suggested Hungary would make an ideal home for 'The Movement' – his new campaign group aimed at



electing right-wing nationalists in Europe. Bannon claimed 2019's elections would revolve around the clash between core EU members such as Germany and Eurosceptic nations like Hungary. The controversial US strategist provoked protests in the UK in November 2018, when he invited to speak to students at Oxford Union and took part in a media conference in Edinburgh. A month before, Scotland's first minister Nicola Sturgeon pulled out of the conference because of Bannon's inclusion. Ms Sturgeon said she did not want to take part in something that risks legitimising or normalising far-right, racist views. Although he had not fully explained his connections with Bannon, Orban had backed his organisation, saying it was time for more people to challenge liberal values across Europe. Elected in 2010, the prime minister had used his parliamentary majority to pressure courts, media and non-governmental groups in ways that breach EU laws. In September, the European Parliament voted to sanction Hungary for flouting EU rules on democracy, civil rights and corruption. Orban has also led the opposition to German chancellor Angela Merkel over the issue of accepting refugees from outside Europe.<sup>59</sup>

Bannon believed the timing was perfect after famously liberal Sweden voted in record numbers in September 2018 for a far-right party that wants a referendum on leaving the 28-nation bloc. Bannon wanted to pull off a similar anti-establishment revolution in the EU and get eurosceptics from all corners of the union voted into the European Parliament at 2019 elections. He had already signed up Italy's most prominent eurosceptic leader, Salvini, to the cause and his project had been praised by another fierce EU critic, Hungarian Prime Minister



Viktor Orban. Bannon was now turning to the EU's northern member states, where his latest admirer was Dutch nationalist Geert Wilders. Wilders said he met Bannon to discuss the idea of a united eurosceptic front. Bannon called his project a political startup with 15 staff and an enormous ambition: to persuade the continent's eurosceptic leaders to mount a coordinated campaign in elections for the European Parliament in May 2019. He wanted the populists to topple what he saw as the EU's liberal establishment and force Brussels to hand back powers to nation states, but Bannon said this was not the ultimate aim. Instead, Bannon's Movement aimed to stack the EU parliament in Strasbourg with parties that could agree on four things: more sovereign rights for EU states, stronger borders, less migration, and the eradication from Europe of what it called radical Islam. The Movement aimed to serve as a campaign center, conducting polling and





data analysis, offering strategic advice, and deploying social media campaigns to mobilize the anti-EU vote for European elections with historically low turnouts. Bannon said he would invest a “couple of million dollars” in the project and planned to relocate to Europe soon. However, uniting eurosceptic parties in a US-style campaign could be mission impossible. Salvini and Orban wanted to weaken the EU but not to leave it, Wilders wanted to destroy it and France’s far-right leader Marine Le Pen wanted to reform the EU before putting French membership to a referendum. Previous attempts to unite the far-right had produced little. After elections in 2014, Le Pen and Wilders forged a far-right parliamentary group, but it was the smallest with just 35 out of 751 seats. Bannon might get a warm welcome from Wilders in Amsterdam but faces a cooler reception in Sweden, despite a big swing toward the far-right Sweden Democrats in the ongoing election.<sup>60</sup>

Austria was another concern particularly since last year. In June 2018, Austria’s far-right Prime Minister, Sebastian Kurz, decided to shut down seven mosques and expel 40 imams from his country. The official reason given was that a play about the Battle of Gallipoli was staged at a mosque managed by the Turkish-Islamic Union for Cultural and Social Cooperation in Austria (ATIB) and control over the Arab Religious Community, which controlled the remaining six mosques. The imams, Austrian officials said, were expelled because they received financial support from abroad. The decision was not surprising since Kurz has been calling for a fight against political Islam, while Kurz was a known Islamophobe who pushed for a controversial headscarf ban at all levels of education, including universities, in April 2018. Under his watch, his party, the Austrian People’s Party (ÖVP), had moved away from its Christian Democrat roots and toward the far-right. Unsurprisingly, Kurz would like the European Union to terminate membership talks with Turkey. The fact that the government in Vienna closed mosques and deported dozens of imams was part of a broader attempt to bring the Austrian Muslim community’s religious life under state control. Such efforts aimed to prevent Muslim immigrants from coming under the influence of ‘radical Islam’ in their native countries. The Austrian government wanted to train imams at local universities and appoint them officially. The problem with this approach, however, is that such decisions set in motion forces of exclusion rather than facilitate the integration of Muslims in Europe or Austria. It created room for Islamophobia within the political mainstream in Europe, marginalized politicians that stressed the importance of





multiculturalism and peaceful coexistence, and perpetuated a discriminatory and racist political atmosphere that excludes Muslims. European efforts to combat “radicalization” are misguided for a very obvious reason. Europeans seem to think that severing the Muslim community’s links to their native countries was the answer. Immigrants from Tunisia or Turkey would never become European, Germans or Austrians, nor were Germans and Austrians eager to consider Muslims as Germans or Austrians.<sup>61</sup>

Later on in the same month, Austrian Interior Minister, Herbert Kickl, said that Austria’s expel to Turkish imams and their families was as part of a crackdown on ‘political Islam’. In total 150 people risked losing their right to residence as seven mosques would also be shut after an investigation by the religious affairs authority into images which emerged in April 2018 of children in a Turkish-backed mosque playing

dead and reenacting the World War I battle of Gallipoli. The Minister said as quoted, “The circle of people possibly affected by these measures - the pool that we’re talking about - comprises around 60 imams.” The interior minister added that the government suspected them of contravening a ban on foreign funding of religious office holders, in citing ATIB which was a branch of Turkey’s religious affairs agency Diyanet. The photos of children, published by the Falter weekly, showed the young boys in camouflage uniforms marching, saluting, waving Turkish flags and then playing dead. Their corpses were then lined up and draped in the flags.<sup>62</sup>

In Italy, Matteo Salvini had forced immigration to the top of Europe’s agenda once again by blocking humanitarian rescue boats from docking in the country’s southern ports — a decision that’s sparked outrage from the coun-



try's own leaders. By refusing to grant landing permission to French NGO boat The Aquarius in mid-June 2018, Salvini, the populist leader of La Lega, brought into sharp focus the meaning of his campaign slogan: 'Italy First'. He said: "We have opened a front in Brussels," said Salvini, "We are contacting the European commission so that it can fulfill its duties towards Italy that have never been respected." The Aquarius' 629 survivors, including 123 unaccompanied minors, 11 young children and 7 pregnant women were all rescued from shipwrecks carrying migrants from Libya to Europe. The deadly route, taken mainly by people from sub-Saharan Africa had seen nearly 700,000 people arrived in Italy since 2013. However, there had been an 80 per cent drop in the number of arrivals in 2018 compared the year before. 16.000 people arrived in Italy by June 2018, down from 60.000 by June 2017. The

move drew condemnation from European leaders. While not going so far as to offer sanctuary to those rescued, the French President Emmanuel Macron accused Italy of 'cynicism and irresponsibility'.<sup>63</sup>

The increasing number of attacks in Italy points to Salvini's growing influence over public opinion on immigration. In July 2018 Salvini proposed to register Romani communities in a census and deport those without Italian citizenship. During the Holocaust, Romani people were among the groups targeted by Nazis and their allies for deportation, internment, forced labour and genocide. Salvini made what Media called a "veiled reference to the late fascist dictator Benito Mussolini", one of the most controversial figures in European history. Salvini tweeted "tanti nemici, tanto onore", meaning "so many enemies, so much honour", a slight variation on Mussolini's well-known say-





ing “molti nemici, molto onore”, or “many enemies, much honour”. Salvini posted the comment on the anniversary of Mussolini’s birth. Outraged critics accused Salvini of “flirting with the ghosts of fascism.” Salvini keep saying that the refugees “will only see the country on a postcard”. He said: We cannot take in one more person. On the contrary, we want to send away a few.” In 2017 Salvini was quoted as saying: “We need a mass cleansing, street by street, piazza by piazza, neighbourhood by neighbourhood.”<sup>64</sup>

In August 2018, Salvini resisted increasing pressure to allow 177 migrants who had been held on a coast guard ship in a Sicilian port for two days to disembark. A public backlash against the seaborne newcomers helped put Salvini and his anti-immigration League party into office in June 2018, alongside the anti-establishment 5-Star Movement. The coast guard’s Diciotti ship was docked in the port of Catania, but Salvini said he would not let the migrants - including 28 minors – to come ashore until other European countries agreed to take them in. They were rescued from an overcrowded boat a week before. In response to criticism, Salvini posted a picture of about 20 protesters holding banners, including one that read, “Let’s stay human”, at the Catania port. He wrote on Twitter, followed by an emoticon blowing a kiss: “The ‘very numerous’ protesters who still want immigrants have arrived in Catania... Should I send them a kiss?” Salvini also addressed a coast guard official who had told *Corriere della Sera* newspaper that the situation was ‘embarrassing’. Salvini replied on Twitter that after over 650,000 arrivals from sea since 2014, “I’m the embarrassing

one?” Salvini repeatedly said that Italy “will no longer be Europe’s refugee camp”, calling on European partners to share the burden. But his hardline position appeared to be irritating his 5-Star ally. Roberto Fico, the 5-Star speaker of the lower house, said on Twitter the migrants “must be able to disembark. They cannot be held on board any longer”.<sup>65</sup>

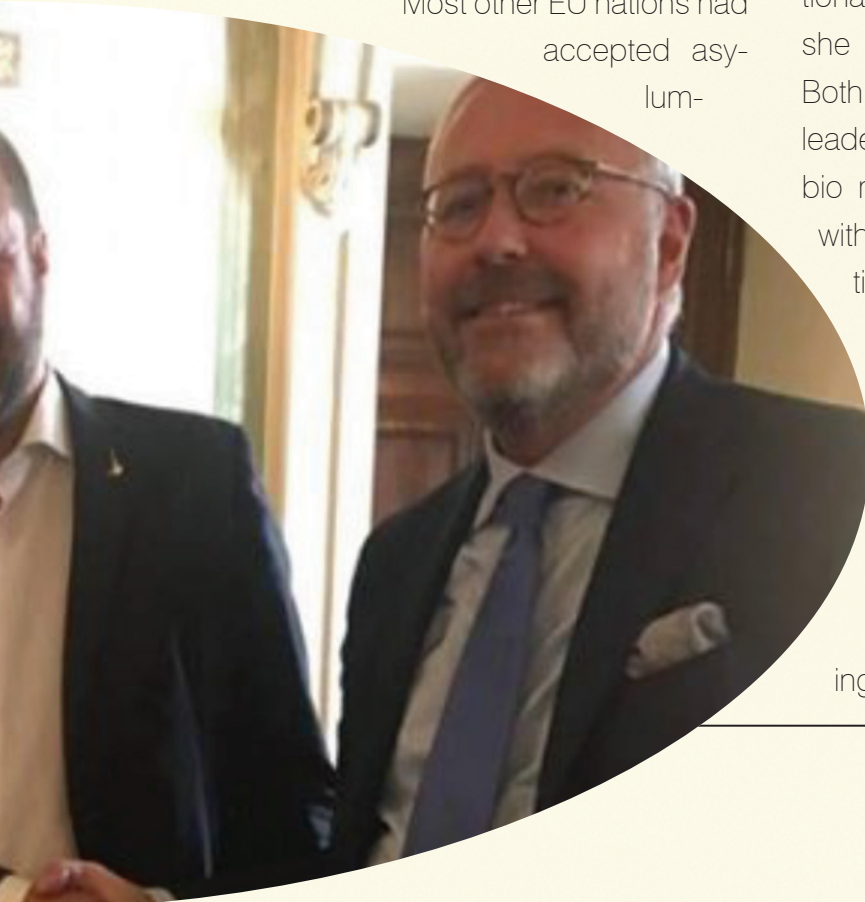
In the same month, Salvini spoke of his shared passion with Hungarian leader Viktor Orban, during which Salvini exchanged compliments and promised to see each other again. After their rendezvous in August 2018 in Milan, the staunchly anti-migrant Orban described Salvini as his hero for refusing to allow rescued asylum-seekers to set foot on Italian soil unless the European Union settled them elsewhere. Salvini said he hoped the meeting was just the first of many more encounters with Orban to change Europe’s destiny. The burgeoning relationship between the two far-right figures might look like another political bromance, but it could turn out to be a Trojan horse for EU leaders, once worried that Brexit would tear their post-war union





apart. Hardline Brexit supporters in the UK accuse EU leaders of trying to ensure Britain's withdrawal from the union was a failure so that other member states don't follow the country out the door, a charge that EU leaders vehemently denied. Meanwhile, far-right factions across the EU were eyeing big wins in the European Parliament elections in May 2019, an opportunity that came only once in five years and promised huge regional influence over policies, most crucially on migration. As talks of a French 'Frexit' or a 'Nexit' in the Netherlands and other nations faded from public discourse, the EU was more likely at threat from those who want to bend the bloc from within. The Orban-Salvini relationship showed that an appetite for such unity was growing. Hungary and Italy clashed over migrant policy several times in 2016. Italy, a frontline nation for asylum-seekers, had long pressed Hungary to take in a share of refugees to lessen its burden. But Hungary had advocated a hardline zero-immigration policy since the mass movement of asylum seekers into Europe in 2015, at the height of the Syrian war.

Most other EU nations had  
accepted asylum-



seekers under the union's relocation program, but Hungary refused to, along with several other eastern European states.<sup>66</sup>

Salvini was also spotted to have made link with Bannon's far-right 'Movement' ahead of EU vote. Salvini said the 2019 European elections were an opportunity for the far-right network to become the main parliamentary group. He said: "The elections were a chance for historical change and the last opportunity to save Europe. We are working to be the main European parliamentary group and forget that sad socialist parable that has brought unemployment and insecurity." His comments came a day after he met Steve Bannon, who had set up a foundation in Brussels called "The Movement" intended to link far-right elements across Europe. Bannon had previously described the goal of the 'loose association' having enough populists to 'command by negation' the European integration policies of Germany's Chancellor Angela Merkel and France's President Emmanuel Macron. Italy's leader, another national conservative party, Giorgia Meloni said she would be joining Bannon's Movement. Both Bannon and Salvini. Dutch Popular Party leader Geert Wilders was also at the Cernobio meeting and posted a photo of himself with Dr Jacob Frenkel, Chairman of international bank JPMorgan Chase, and a former governor of the Bank of Israel. Salvini met with Viktor Orban in August and the two agreed they were 'walking down the same path' after they discussed forming an anti-migration front to oppose the French president's policies.<sup>67</sup>

By now, Far-right Salvini has been taking full control of the Italian government.



Four months after the new Italian government was installed, the reactionary nature of the coalition between the populist Five Star Movement (M5S) and the far-right Lega (League) emerged more clearly. Despite the fact that the League won only about 17% of the votes in the previous elections (compared with 32% for the M5S), the interior minister and League leader Matteo Salvini was emerging as the undisputed head of the government. He was dictating the government agenda as he saw fit. Moreover, the radically conservative and racist propaganda of Salvini was giving cause for concern to both progressive and radical forces, and the European Union (EU) neoliberal establishment. Salvini's intent was clear: scapegoat immigrants and refugees to claim "illegal immigration" as the source of all evil. His strategy seemed to be working, since, according to the latest polls, the League could win more than 32% in a new vote. Salvini had already demonstrated how racist and intolerant he could be towards immigrants. Emblematic was the case of the Italian coastguard ship *Ubaldo Diciotti* that rescued 177 asylum seekers in the Mediterranean Sea in August 2018. After docking at Catania in Sicily, southern Italy, Salvini refused to let refugees disembark for more than a week. He asked other EU states to take them and provoked a humanitarian crisis. Salvini's goal was to renegotiate the Dublin Regulation on immigration. According to this, refugees could apply for asylum only in one single EU country, which decided the outcome of the applications. The process could not be restarted in a different jurisdiction. He neglected that the Dublin Regulation was signed and ratified by the centre-right Silvio Berlusconi government in 2003, of which the then-Northern League was

part. Moreover, since 2014 the European Parliament held 22 meetings to discuss the Dublin Regulation, and Salvini didn't take part in any. On top of that, Salvini also invited the fascist Hungarian President Viktor Orban to discuss a common line against "illegal immigration" and discussed how to protest borders and "national identities". Needless to say, the meeting had been welcomed by other fascists such as France's Marine Le Pen and US alt-right figure Steve Bannon.<sup>68</sup>

During the reviewed period, the Italian government was facing accusations of fostering a climate of racism after a string of attacks in July 2018, the same day President Donald Trump praised the Prime Minister at the White House for his hard-line immigration stance. Italian athlete Daisy Osakue, a 22-year-old discus thrower whose parents were from Nigeria, suffered cornea damage when she was hit with an egg thrown from a car in northern Italy. The incident gave new fuel to opposition politicians' argument that the government's anti-immigrant rhetoric had resulted in a spate of violence against people of color. Former Prime Minister Matteo Renzi tweeted: "The attacks against people of different color skin is now an emergency. This is now obvious, nobody can deny it, especially if they sit in government." Two months earlier in Italy, a Malian man was fatally shot while gathering scrap metal, a Moroccan man was beaten into a coma, and a Senegalese asylum seeker was physically attacked. In addition, according to the Guardian, "at least eight people from various African countries have been shot by air rifles since the start of June in possible racist attacks." Since taking power in Italy's governing coalition, an alliance between the anti-establishment Five



Star Movement and the far-right League had forcefully promoted an anti-immigrant agenda, vowing to slow the flow of African and Middle Eastern migrants into the country. Interior Minister Matteo Salvini had led the charge to alter immigration policy. Salvini had also prevented boats carrying rescue migrants from disembarking on Italian docks, challenged Germany over the European Union's immigration policies and proposed a census on the Italy's Roma population.<sup>69</sup>

A kind of 'funny story' happened in the United Kingdom. On 23 January 2014, a man by name Stephen Yaxley-Lennon was jailed for mortgage fraud. Months earlier, he had resigned from the group of which he had been de facto leader, the English Defence League (EDL). Under the nom de guerre Tommy Robinson, Yaxley-Lennon complained that he was the victim of a "stitch-up" and tweeted a picture of a meal of mashed potatoes, meat and chips. "See u all in 18 months," he wrote. Then he went quiet. On 23 June 2018, as 100,000 protesters marched through central London to demand a "People's Vote" on the Brexit deal, a small group of counter-demonstrators chanted: "Whose streets? Our streets." Another cried: "Tommy, Tommy, Tommy." Many wore T-shirts bearing the hashtag #FreeTommy. Robinson was in jail once again, and this time the world knew about it. Robinson political engagement began when he joined the British National Party in 2004, but Robinson later claimed to have resigned his membership after a year. It was as leader of the EDL, which began in 2009 as a group of football hooligans protesting against Islamist preachers, that Robinson first achieved renown. In 2010, he was outed as Yaxley-Lennon, only to declare

himself to be Paul Harris. Under Robinson, the EDL also had multiple identities. On paper, it was simply opposed to "militant Islam" and its structure included Jewish, Sikh and LGBT divisions. On the street, its supporters were angry, male, intimidating, mostly white – and prone to directing racist abuse at anyone with darker skin. In 2013, Robinson resigned as EDL leader, citing the dangers of "far-right extremism". The group became another by-word for alienated white nationalists. By the time Robinson was released from prison in November 2014, a refugee crisis was engulfing Europe. Instead of returning to the streets of Britain, he travelled to Germany and sought to expand the country's anti-Islam movement, Pegida (Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West). Next came Brexit, Donald Trump and a new term for a slippery, extremist ideology now dominating corners of the internet: the alt-right. Robinson spied an opportunity. He became a columnist for Canadian far-right website Rebel Media and cultivated a YouTube channel. Until being banned by Twitter earlier this in 2018, he had 413,000 followers. As in his EDL days, Robinson combined dog whistle tactics with the insistence that he was not a racist. More potently, he borrowed the alt-right's argument that he was merely defending free speech. Then Robinson overreached. After standing outside Leeds Crown Court in May 2018 and live-streaming a video during an ongoing trial, he was arrested and sentenced to 13 months in jail for contempt of court. But this was not the story the world heard. "Reason #1776 for the original #Brexit. Don't let America follow in those footsteps," tweeted Donald Trump Jr, the US president's eldest son, about the case. Conservative US radio host Rush Limbaugh



acknowledged that Robinson had “technically violated a judge’s order”, but told listeners that “the real thing to take away from this story is that they categorise this guy as ‘far right’, which then permits them to spirit him away”. Australian supporters held rallies. In the UK, petitions to “free Tommy Robinson” had attracted hundreds of thousands of signatures. “I’m sick of being the silenced majority in my own country and I need people like Tommy to fight my corner,” one supporter wrote. On 9 June 2018, as many as 15,000 protesters gathered in central London under the #FreeTommy banner. To his supporters, Robinson was the victim of an oppressive state.<sup>70</sup> Now the convicted thug and fraudster has been appointed as an UKIP adviser, which served as evidence that the rise of fascism had always been aided and abetted by powerful elites. In Britain these years, politicians spent most of their time blaming migrants for social ills, whilst implementing policies which suppressed living standards and increased insecurity. Britain’s rightwing media injected a daily dose of venom against migrants, refugees and Muslims into the body politic – a lethal concoction of myths, distortions, selective half-truths and outright lies. The official left campaigns used the national megaphones gifted to them by the EU referendum to stir up hatred: from portraying EU citizens as potential rapists and murderers, lying about Turkey’s accession to the EU and a consequent influx of Turkish criminals to Nigel Farage’s Breaking Point poster.<sup>71</sup>

Many believed that Tommy Robinson had been held up as a ‘free speech martyr’ by the far right. The ‘Free Tommy Robinson’ campaign had demanded the release of Robinson, who admitted to contempt of court after he

filmed outside a trial. His supporters held two ‘Free Tommy’ mobilizations demanding his release, on 9 June and 14 July 2018. Far right figures from across the US and Europe spoke or sent messages of support to both. InfoWars alt right website founder Alex Jones claimed to be funding Robinson. Also, the racist Middle East Forum (MEF) think tank in the US admitted



to funding both ‘Free Tommy’ demonstrations. The MEF’s president was longstanding Islamophobe Daniel Pipes. Raheem Kassam, a fellow of MEF, said the costs of the June and July mobilisations came to “£10,000 to £15,000 per event. Kassam was the former London editor of racist website Breitbart News, and a former



chief adviser for Nigel Farage. Republican congressman Paul Gosar travelled to the 14 July event. His attendance was organised by MEF. Gosar was thought to be Steve Bannon's link to the Freedom Caucus, a group of hardline conservatives in the US House of Representatives. Bannon, Donald Trump's former presidential election campaign manager, was re-



ported to have met senior Tory figures. These include Boris Johnson and Jacob Rees-Mogg. Bannon was also building a far right think tank called The Movement, designed to pull European politics to the right. The MEF helped Robinson with his legal costs. It had previously helped other far right figures with legal costs.

Islamophobic politician Geert Wilders from the Netherlands received support from MEF. One such backer is the Edgerly Foundation. It gave MEF almost £200,000 between 2000 and 2015—almost £40,000 a year in 2013, 2014 and 2015. William S Edgerly is one of the trustees of the foundation. His money comes from the time he was CEO of State Street Corporation, a Fortune 500-listed bank. A 2011 study found that between 2000 and 2009 MEF received over £6.5 million in donations. Other MEF backers include the Russell Berrie Foundation, which gave almost £250,000 to MEF between 2000 and 2003. Another backer was the Klarman Family Foundation. As of 2013 its trustees included Seth A Klarman, the founder of the Boston-based hedge fund the Baupost Group. As of 2015 the group was worth more than £15 billion. In 2010 the foundation gave MEF almost £40,000. Daniel Pipes is the president of the Middle East Forum. He had been a longstanding and vicious Islamophobe who provided a bridge between the far right and the US neocons. Pamela Geller invited Robinson to speak in New York at a 2012 conference hosted by her Stop Islamification Of Nations organisation.<sup>72</sup>

In November 2018, in front of around 1,000 supporters in central London, Tommy Robinson digressed from one of his familiar tirades against Islam to push a different cause: his petition to “Stop the political witch hunt against British troops.” Robinson was best known for his hate-filled speeches against Islam, from organized street protests to his rabble-rousing dispatches as an alternative journalist. But this petition signalled a different approach: An explicit push to hijack veterans' issues, in a bid to cultivate support for his extreme politics



among current and former soldiers. The effort had raised fresh concern about extremism in the British Army, and caught the attention of military officials. Radicalization experts worry that Robinson's push to court active and former soldiers came at a particularly toxic time, as the military grapples with budget cuts and falling morale, presenting a potential recruitment ground for extremist movements looking to exploit their grievances. Moreover, their specialized military training means that radicalized soldiers present a greater national security risk than civilians. Robinson was always hijacking a non-controversial topic and using it as a way of broadening his appeal, increasing his support base and bringing more people on board with his anti-Muslim ideology. The campaign had since morphed into a more nebulous platform for disaffected soldiers or veterans to express their grievances with the government — from military funding cuts, poor conditions in barracks, and lack of support for vets, to more-political complaints, such as a perceived failure to confront Islamic extremism at home.<sup>73</sup>

Meanwhile, the Far Right 'squads' continued stir controversies in the U.K. During the reviewed period, anti-Islam Boris Johnson, again, made comments about the Burqa sparked a furious debate, which happened in the wake of his comments as the anti-Muslim hate crime watchdog Tell Mama reported a severe spike in Islamophobic incidents which they directly linked to his comments. Boris Johnson did not directly create anti-Muslim hate crime, but he lent it credence, a feeling of legitimacy. He was in power and his words have power. What was deeply unsettling was that the timing of these comments is not coincidental. The #Free-Tommy movement highlighted the connected-

ness of the far-right on a global scale, loosely scattered yet converging across causes. Boris Johnson had been supported by Steve Bannon. Various influential far-right groups had been supporting Tommy Robinson's release. The man had used his time in prison to parade himself as some sort of victim rather than an aggressive bigot. All of this had whipped up a maelstrom of support and it is that in which Boris Johnson had been tapping into, knowingly. Muslim women were an easy target, and being erased entirely of their voices, they have endured the bulk of anti-Muslim abuse and assaults. Brexit's social reaction was arguably the opposite where a political event didn't create racism but set it at a boiling rate as bigots felt they had won and were no longer the outcasts in the U.K.<sup>74</sup>

With regard to Far Right issues in the U.K., the Islamophobia Observatory would suggest a close attention to Nigel Farage, a far-right politician who founded Britain's U.K. Independence Party, who was also the mastermind behind Britain's vote to leave the European Union. He dedicated his career to campaigning for Brexit of which he had been advocating since 1999. After his victory, Farage began to help Donald Trump's campaign during the 2016 presidential election. He had known Stephen K. Bannon, a Trump advisor who would briefly become a senior White House aide, for years. Farage's nativist vision and populist messaging, especially toward immigration, were strikingly similar to the views of President Trump. Speaking to Media, he said: "I'm concerned about Islamism, but I'm not concerned about the religion of Islam. The worry about Islamism is that those who adhere to that in the U.K. don't accept U.K. culture, don't accept U.K.



law. They want to impose their version of the world upon the host country. And that would lead us toward disaster. It doesn't work. I'm very specific that I'm not against the religion, I'm not against Islam. There is a danger that if the right goes too far to the right it starts to become confrontational."<sup>75</sup>

In Germany, Germany's far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) was now becoming the country's second most popular party after overtaking Angela Merkel's coalition partners. A poll had shown that AfD were now more popular than the Social Democrats (SPD), who co-rule the country with Mrs Merkel's Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union alliance. The anti-immigration party level came to 18 per cent, moved up two percentage points since a survey in September 2018. Mrs Merkel's CDU/CSU alliance also lost a point, falling to 28 per cent - the worst result for the group since 1997. The AfD, which launched in 2013, first entered the national parliament in 2017 after winning 12.6 per cent of the vote. The group began as an anti-euro party, but increasingly marketed itself towards those who were unhappy with Mrs Merkel's liberal immigration policies.<sup>76</sup> The AfD and the anti-Islam Pegida movement announced a joint rally to protest crimes perpetrated by migrants after two similar protests turned violent in August 2018. The rally took place in the eastern German city of Chemnitz, where the death of a German man - allegedly at the hands of a Syrian and an Iraqi - sparked clashes between rival protesters and random attacks on foreigners. The AfD's chapter in Saxony, the state where the violence took place, said the rally would allow people to "jointly mourn Daniel H and all of the victims of forced multiculturalism," using a shortened version of the

victim's name in line with German privacy laws. AfD leader Joerg Meuthen told media that his party was "not fanning the flames - there is a dark mood in the country which is only too justified." A spontaneous protest in response to the death drew 6,000 anti-immigrant protesters and 1,000 counter protesters, resulted in clashes in which 20 people, including two police officers, were injured. The AfD was founded in 2013 and first gained seats in Germany's national parliament after elections in 2017. The Pegida, or Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the West, was founded around the same time and gained traction during the refugee crisis.<sup>77</sup> Chancellor Angela Merkel's spokesman said in August 2018 that the Germany would not tolerate vigilante justice, after hundreds of far-right protesters staged a violent demonstration following a fatal stabbing that authorities blamed on a Syrian and an Iraqi. The protest in the eastern city of Chemnitz was the latest manifestation of unrest since Merkel's government allowed about 1 million asylum seekers to enter Germany in 2015, triggering a shift to the right in German politics. Television news channels broadcast amateur footage of skinheads chasing a foreign-looking man through the streets. Other clips showed hundreds of demonstrators shouting "We are the people!", a slogan used by far-right supporters. Roland Woeller, interior minister of the state of Saxony, which includes Chemnitz, said authorities would not allow anarchists to run rampant. He urged all sides to remain calm and rely on official police information for updates, saying that misinformation and lies were circulating in social media.<sup>78</sup>

Based on its observation since 2016, the Observatory saw 'immigration' as the most sig-





nificant issue referred by Far Right politicians in Germany, while their points often directed straight to the issue. Roland Tichy for instance, the editor-in-chief of the conservative publication 'Tichy's Einblick', regards migration issue as "the mother of all problems." He said: "Germany has taken more than 20 million migrants, which requires a new land built up totally for them. This migration is happening fast, uncontrolled, and without limit. That's certainly causing fear to many." Still according to Roland, the whole social system was under huge pressure, with schools, hospitals and asylums overwhelmed with migrants. Other than that, people also feared that these migrants with different religion and culture background would threaten the European value of democracy and the traditional Christian culture. The problem was becoming worse as the labor market had yet to come up with the plan to absorb these new arrivals. Roland added: "More than 60 percent of them cannot read or write or count. They don't

speak the same language, either. Right now their unemployment is 90 percent, and the social security system is running out of money." Matthew Karnitschnig, the chief Europe correspondent for Politico, pointed out that opposing views against migrations had been around for years, even before the Syrian war. However, it was the recent rise of migrant numbers in a short period that heated the conflict. Based on his observations, Matthew suggested that what happened in Austria and Hungary was just part of the entire picture of how these furious voices had been changing the immigration policies in mainstream parties. Matthew said that of all the factors causing the present dilemma, the lack of participation of the European Union probably bears most blames. He described Matteo Salvini phenomenon as "the result of a failure of EU policy."<sup>79</sup>

During the last 9-months period, the German right-wing extremists had even gone far beyond the extreme. More dangerously, the



authority had found evidence that Far Right groups compiled 'enemy lists' featuring the details of more than 35,000 people. The information was revealed in response to a parliamentary question posted by German MP Martina Renner, a lawmaker for the left-wing Die Linke party, who focused on right-wing extremism. She asked the German government how many people were on so-called enemy lists of neo-Nazi groups, and how many of them had been informed. The results, she said were extremely worrying. Investigations into prominent right-wing extremist groups including the National Socialist Underground, an alleged far-right terror cell in the German military, and the far-right prepper group Nordkreuz, had revealed the existence of a number of such lists, including contact details for the listed 'enemies'. One of the lists was compiled by an alleged far-right terror cell that was uncovered in the German military in April 2017. The cell's alleged leader,

a lieutenant known as Franco A., had successfully created a false identity as a Syrian refugee, and was accused of plotting terror attacks under the guise of the refugee in order to drum up public anger towards immigrants. When police raided the cell, they found, along with an assault-rifle case carved with a swastika, a list of 32 names of left-wing potential targets considered to be pro-migrant. Franco A. had also allegedly surveyed the Berlin headquarters of the Amadeu Antonio Foundation, a leading German NGO working to combat the far-right, making sketches of the building. A recent assessment by the German Interior Ministry found that there had been an increase in people joining right-wing extremist groups since 2017, when attacks surged in response to an influx of migrants into Germany. The report attributed the drop in attacks in part due to heavy sentences imposed by the courts.<sup>80</sup>





Meanwhile, there was something else happening in Germany. A new book highly critical of Islam and Muslims had been flying off the shelves in Germany and become a non-fiction bestseller. The controversial book titled "Hostile Takeover: How Islam Impedes Progress and Threatens Society" reached the number one spot on Der Spiegel's non-fiction list after being on the market for less than a fortnight. It was a critique of Islam as a religion, which the author sees as detrimental to people sharing it, based on a literal reading of the Koran. Written by one-time politician and former member of the executive board of the Bundesbank, Thilo Sarrazin, the work came eight years after Sarrazin's previous take on Muslims titled "Germany Abolishes Itself". Focusing on what he called a failure of multiculturalism policies, that book accused Arab and Turkish immigrants of 'dumbing down' the German society, and shifted 1.5 million copies. The release of "Hostile Takeover" came during a period of heightened tensions in Germany, with much public attention focused crimes committed by immigrants.

It was started by the murder of a man in the city of Chemnitz in August 2018, which triggered massive anti-immigration protests in parts of the country with violent clashes erupting between left and right-wing demonstrators. Calling Islam an "ideology of violence in the guise of a religion," Sarrazin's latest work had a somewhat bumpy path to the shelves. US-based publisher Random House, which signed a book deal with Sarrazin in November 2016, refused to print, leading to a lawsuit from the author. The manuscript was eventually picked up by Munich-based FinanzBuch Verlag, a publisher that usually specializes in non-fiction books dealing with business and trading subjects. Mainstream media outlets, both in and outside of Germany, have slammed the book. A review by Deutsche Welle called it a "distorted picture based on prejudice" and compared Sarrazin's way of reading the Koran to that of jihadist groups. The UK's Financial Times criticized its "reductive approach" pulling up Sarrazin for his lack of knowledge of Arabic and for not being either a theologian or religious scholar. The crit-







icism did not stop the book from becoming a best seller on online retailer Amazon, however, receiving an average 4.3 stars out of 5 from the 264 reviews made by online purchasers.<sup>81</sup>

Another serious alarm on 'Far-Rights' came from Spain, as Vox party picked up 12 seats in Andalucía's 109-seat parliament, exceeded expectations and could see the socialist PSOE party lose control of the heartland it has governed since 1982. Vox was a bunch of fringe populists, best known for unsubtle gestures such as unfurling a giant Spanish flag on the Rock of Gibraltar. A widely mocked video released in early November showed Vox leader Santiago Abascal leading a posse on horseback and the party boasting of a "reconquest" of Spain that would begin in Andalucía. David Duke, former grand wizard of the Ku Klux Klan was thrilled by the prospect of Vox's reconquista, as had Marine Le Pen, who tweeted her congratulations to "our Vox friends, who have achieved a really significant result in Spain for a young and dynamic movement". Vox's Andalusian leader, Francisco Serrano, had been lambasted for tweeting about women who were too unattractive to be gang-raped, about

"psychopathic feminazis", about the threat immigrants pose to European identity, and about his pride in being branded sexist. Then, there was the issue that formed one of the main planks of the Vox platform: immigration. Most political analysts saw the Catalan crisis and the issue of immigration –53,500 migrants and refugees arrived on the southern shores of Spain in 2018– as key components of Vox's nationalistic narrative.<sup>82</sup>

Come to the worst part of this section report, the election of Jair Bolsonaro as the President of Brazil had marked a serious point in the rise of the global far right. It came a day after the shocking anti-Semitic attack on the Tree of Life Synagogue, Pittsburgh, in which 11 people were killed. Notorious for his attacks on women, black and LGBT people, Bolsonaro declared that "leftists will have to leave the country or go to jail. These red outlaws will be banished from the homeland", and declared refugees "the scum of the earth". The alt-right was supporting far-right groups in Europe, North America and Latin America, including support for Bolsonaro in Brazil.<sup>83</sup>



## 2.3. Islamophobia in the Rest of the World

### 2.3.1. Myanmar<sup>84</sup>

Since 2012, there has been a continued spread of anti-Muslim sentiments, mainly in Rakhine state and further escalated towards tension between the Rakhines and the Rohingyas elsewhere in Myanmar. There were at least two justifying reasons: First, the release of radical Buddhist monk Ashin Wirathu and the then formation of the 969 movement under his leadership which provided an organized platform for the promotion of Islamophobia. The movement was launched in 2012, propagates fear of Muslims (who make up 4% of the total population according to the 1983 census in Myanmar) on the false claim that eventually Muslims would become the 'majority element' and the

largest group within Myanmar. Members of the 969 movement often act as prime instigators of the anti-Muslim movement all over the country. Second, the absence of media censorship since 2011 had the side effect of allowing hate speech to flourish unchecked. Uncensored media has opened the avenues to the use and abuse of social media, propagating anti Rohingya, as well as anti-Muslim speeches and messages. The 2014 riot in Mandalay highlights the misuse of the media. For instance, a fabricated story in social media of molestation of a Buddhist girl by her Muslim employer triggered a massive violence, hence Muslims in Rakhine State identified as Rohingyas have







then been vilified. In parallel, ultranationalists have framed Muslims as posing a threat to Buddhists in Myanmar. They made claims about high Muslim birthrates, increasing Muslim economic influence, and Muslim plans to take over Myanmar. They argued that Muslims were increasing in numbers, in part by marrying Buddhist women and forcing them to convert.

The most recent situation with regard to the atrocities against Rohingyas in Myanmar has become unbearable. According to a new report released by the Ontario International Development Agency, which involved researchers and organizations from Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Norway and the Philippines, more than 24,000 Rohingya Muslims had been killed by Myanmar's state forces since August 2017. The figures were revealed in the report titled 'Forced Migration of Rohingya: The Untold Experience'.

The research brought the estimated number of murdered Rohingya up to 23,962 from its previously provided number of 9,400 by the Doctors without Borders. More than 34,000 people were thrown into fire and more than 114,000 others were beaten, according to the research. It also said 17,718 Rohingya women and girls were raped since Myanmar army and police systematically targeted the world's most persecuted group. The research showed that more than 115,000 Rohingya houses were burnt down and 113,000 others were vandalized. A previous report by the Doctors Without Borders had said at least 9,400 Rohingya were killed in Rakhine from 25 August to 24 September 2017. The humanitarian group said the number included 730 children below the age of 5. The UN had branded operations by Myanmar security forces as ethnic cleansing. Myanmar de-





nied all accusations of atrocities and said it was defending itself against Rohingya militants who launched deadly attacks on police posts.<sup>85</sup>

Social media was in particular playing the significant role behind the calamity suffered by Rohingyas. In June 2018, Facebook blacklisted two ultranationalist monks and the largest Buddhist nationalist organization, and again pledged to increase the number of content reviewer. Reuters and the Human Rights Center at UC Berkeley School of Law found more than 1,000 examples of posts, comments, images and videos attacking Myanmar's Muslims – including some material that had been on the site for more than six years. In December 2018, Facebook announced that it removed a total of 135 Facebook accounts, 425 pages and 17 groups, as well as a further 15 Instagram accounts. The accounts had a wide reach, with

around 2.5 million people following at least one. Meanwhile, 6,400 people belonged to at least one of the Facebook groups, while around 1,300 followed at least one of the Instagram accounts. According to Facebook, a number of its accounts were operated by the Myanmar military as part of a coordinated hate campaign against the Rohingya people. This is just one indication of the scale of the hate speech problem in Myanmar. Far more resources must be dedicated to tackle this onerous scourge.

Ultrationalists often reacted strongly against Muslims in Myanmar wearing hijab and other forms of Islamic dresses. They interpreted such dress-code as a sign of Muslims' greater allegiance to their faith than to the Burmese nation. Meanwhile, they also employed gruesome images of ISIS brutality and selective photos from episodes of communal violence in





Myanmar to suggest all Muslims were potential terrorists. Some ultranationalists also used dehumanizing language to characterize Muslims, a hallmark of dangerous speeches. According to the Amnesty International Report on Myanmar of 2017-2018, throughout the year, religious minorities including Muslims in Myanmar, continued to face discrimination, now it covers areas far beyond Rakhine State. For instance in April 2018, following pressure from a mob of Buddhist hardline nationalists, local authorities and police closed two religious schools in Yangon, the capital city of Myanmar. Moreover, in September, Kayin State authorities issued an order requiring all Muslims in the state to report to local authorities before travelling. Although the Kayin State Chief Minister later said that the order was an “administrative error”, travel restrictions reportedly remained in place at the

end of the year. On 25 November 2018, a large protest against repatriation of the Rohingya was held in Sittwe the state capital of Rakhine state. More than 100 people led by Buddhists monks marched through the city, holding red banners and chanting slogans such as, “There will be no benefits to us or our country if we accept the Bengalis”. This demonstration was held 10 days after the suspension of the repatriation process was likely part of an orchestrated campaign by the Myanmar military to deflect criticism from the international community regarding its policies against the Rohingya.

In fact, the military has been very sensitive about independent reporting and therefore unwilling to allow journalists access to northern Rakhine State, where it carried out clearance operations in 2017. Several journalists who managed to gather information on the





military's execution of ten Rohingya males were later entrapped and charged with violating the colonial-era Official Secrets Act. This was clearly a warning to other journalists, who have become much more cautious in their reporting. Facebook posts and messages have also played a key part in spreading fear and inciting anti-Muslim violence in Myanmar. The wide reach of such social media platforms, the speed of information dissemination, the impact of arresting images and incendiary text, and the participatory nature of sharing and commenting on the platform have contributed to an atmosphere of heightened anxiety among Buddhists and other non-Muslims in Myanmar. This also has spurred offline action.

The international community keeps condemning Myanmar on this issue. Following a mission to investigate claims against the mili-

tary of Myanmar of human rights abuses, the UN released a report that stated top officials in the armed forces must be investigated for genocide and crimes against humanity. The report states that the military tactics were "grossly disproportionate to actual security threats." Six senior military figures were also named in the report with the conclusion that they should go on trial for their involvement. These names included Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing and his deputy. The UN had also heaped criticism on the country's de facto leader, Aung San Suu Kyi, for doing nothing to prevent the attacks. The

UN had suggested the case be referred to the International Criminal Court (ICC). Unfortunately, Myanmar was not a signatory to the Rome Statute that created the court, while a referral to the ICC required the agreement of all five permanent Security Council members and was something China will likely not support. Knowing this, the report instead suggested that an independent body be created to properly investigate the findings with an aim to prosecute those involved.<sup>86</sup>

Further, a UN fact-finding team said in October 2018 that a genocide was still underway against Myanmar's Rohingya Muslims, as it presented a report at the Security Council calling for the matter to be referred to the International Criminal Court. The Chair of the UN fact-finding mission on Myanmar, made state-



ment to media saying that beyond mass killings, the conflict included the ostracisation of the targeted population, prevention of births and widespread displacement in camps. The fact-finding mission's report was first made public in September 2018, called on the council to refer the Myanmar situation to the International Criminal Court in The Hague, or to create an ad hoc international criminal tribunal, as was done with the former Yugoslavia. The report said that Myanmar's top generals, including Commander-in-Chief Min Aung Hlaing, must be investigated and prosecuted for genocide in Rakhine State. Myanmar had rejected accusations that its military committed atrocities in the crackdown in 2017 that forced 720,000 Rohingya to flee over the border to Bangladesh. The Myanmar government also rejected the UN mission's findings, questioning its independence and pointing out that it had established itself an independent investigative commission made up of Asian diplomats.<sup>87</sup>

Meanwhile, Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi in August 2018 defended her government's actions in Rakhine state, where about 700,000 Rohingya Muslims fled from a brutal counterinsurgency campaign to neighboring Bangladesh. She said terrorism, not social discrimination or inequality, triggered the crisis. Suu Kyi made the comments in a lecture in Singapore in which she reviewed her two years in pow-



er: "We who are living through the transition in Myanmar view it differently than those who observe it from the outside and who will remain untouched by its outcome." In response to accusation that Myanmar's army of carrying out ethnic cleaning, or even genocide, against the Muslim minority, in a population which was overwhelmingly Buddhist, Suu Kyi's government said it carried out justifiable counterinsurgency operations in response to attacks by militants on security forces. In a measure of the national sensitivity of the subject, Suu Kyi did not refer to the Rohingya by name in her speech. The term was rejected by many Buddhists in Myanmar who do not consider the group a native minority and charge it entered illegally from Bangladesh, although many families had lived for generations in Myanmar. The Rohingya faced both social and official discrimination, and are generally denied citizenship.<sup>88</sup>



### 2.3.2. Islamophobia in China

Throughout year 2018, reports from United Nations bodies as well as human rights groups including Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch asserted that hundreds of thousands and possibly millions of ethnic Uyghur are detained against their will in mass re-education camps under the pretext of preventing extremism in China's western Xinjiang region.<sup>89</sup> Media reports also suggested that China was participating in the practice of forced conversion whereby Muslims, among other things, were forced to eat foods which are forbidden in Islam. The topic had then gained much attention as later on, another report released by the UN mentioned that between 500,000 to a million people were, or had been detained in re-education camps in China's Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Further, a UN human rights panel estimated that Chinese authorities had imprisoned as many as one million Uyghurs.<sup>90</sup> It alleged that this practice of re-education was the largest mass incarceration of a minority population in the world today. It was said that thousands were being held for months at a time, and subjected to political indoctrination sessions. Many had reportedly

been detained for praying, wearing 'Islamic' clothing, or having foreign connections, such as travel abroad in the past, or visiting relatives living in another country. Some reports even mentioned the deaths of detainees in the centers, and also other human rights abuses occurring in the over-crowded centers secured by guard towers, barbed wire, and high walls.<sup>91</sup>

In August 2018, the United Nations' Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) issued a report expressing concerns over China's mass internment of ethnic Uyghurs and restrictions on their religious freedom.<sup>92</sup> This was followed by the Annual Report of the US Congress Executive Commission on China (CECC) issued on 10 October 2018 highlighting unprecedented repression of ethnic minorities in Xinjiang. The report indicated "a dramatic increase in Communist Party Control over government, society, religion, and business; and the increasing use of technology and surveillance as a tool of repression". The report documented gross violations of human rights against Uyghur Muslims, harassment, detention, suppression of free speech,



and other severe restrictions on civil society, which the report alleged may constitute crimes against humanity. Both Republican and Democratic members of US Congress have called for sanctions on Chinese officials implicated in the internment of Uyghurs.

In October 2018, the European Parliament adopted a resolution calling the Chinese government to immediately end the mass arbitrary detention of members of the Uyghur and Kazakh minorities, to close all camps and detention centers, and to release detained persons; while mentioning a deep concern with regard to numerous allegations of poor conditions, torture and deaths inside the camps.<sup>93</sup>

The Chinese government officially denied the existence of such re-education camps, however the on-going news and developments suggested otherwise.

Firstly, in October 2018 the Chinese government introduced a new law aimed at addressing extremism that might be seen as legalizing the reported re-education camps. The following are some important clauses of 'The Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region De-radicalization Regulation'. Article 3 defines extremism as the "expressions and behaviors that are influenced by extremism, rendering radical religious ideas,

and rejecting and intervening in normal production and life." Furthermore, "extremism... refers to the propositions and actions of inciting hatred, inciting discrimination, and advocating violence by distorting religious teachings or other means." The definition contained in Article 3 was a very general concept which may incorporate any activities that differ from the normal production and life in China. Article 9 prohibits activities include activities to "promote and disseminate the idea of extremism", "Intervening in normal cultural and recreational activities, or rejecting public goods and services such as radio and television", "Generalizing the concept of halal, expanding the concept of halal to other fields outside the field of halal food, and rejecting and interfering with the secular life of others by the name of the truth", "Not allowing children to receive national education and hinder the implementation of the national education system", "publishing, printing, distributing, selling, producing, downloading, storing, copying, consulting, exchanging, holding articles, publications, audio and video containing extreme content", "Deliberately interfering with or undermining the implementation of the family planning policy", and "Other extreme speeches and behaviors." With the 'vague' definition of extremism, the list of pro-



hibited activities in Article 9 set a risky precedent, as these activities referred to practices that would otherwise be allowed in accordance with basic rights to freedom of expression, freedom of religion or belief which is protected under international standards. The new law identifies what de-radicalization might involve. Article 14 of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region De-radicalization Regulation referred to the types of centers recently reported in the media and suggest that to combat extremism, it is crucial to “combine individual education with vocational skills education and training center education, combine legal education with helping education activities, ideological education, psychological counseling, behavior correction and learning of national language, The combination of learning law, learning skills, educational transformation and humanistic care will enhance the effectiveness of educational transformation.” In accordance with Article 33 of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region De-radicalization Regulation: “Educational performance training institutions such as vocational skill education and training centers shall carry out national common language writing, laws and regulations, and vocational skills education and training, organize and carry out extremist ideological education, psychological

correction, behavior correction, and promote the thinking of educated and trained personnel.” It is quite clear that the new law dealing with the concept of extremism is excessive and so may give rise to abuse, as virtually any activity could fall within the scope of the provisions. If the reported re-education centers truly exist, whether justified by the new law or not, the local policy might constitute a violation of human rights, and may specifically threaten the ‘identity’ of the religious minority group in China’s Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, which is a clear example of a counter-extremism strategy going too far towards justification of the forced conversion of Muslim minorities living in China.<sup>94</sup>

Secondly, there have been tough approaches applied in the Xinjiang province as well as other provinces such as Ningxia since the last few years. The Xinjiang province is a region in the northwest corner of China, populated mostly by ethnic Uyghur and other Muslim people. Over the past three years, it has been widely reported by media that authorities have “dramatically stepped up security and surveillance” in the region, introducing “police checkpoints, re-education centers and mass DNA collection”. In 2017, for instance, international



news media said that authorities in China's Xinjiang region were applying a policy of prohibiting parents from giving children some Islamic names to dilute the influence of religion on life in the ethnic Uyghur minority heartland. At the earlier times, vast media also reported that local Xinjiang officials had discouraged or prohibited Islamic veils, while government-linked figures had called for bans of mosques with domes or other Middle Eastern architectural styles.<sup>95</sup> Before that, the Xinjiang province had put a ban on 'beards' which was blamed by human rights activists as repressive policy that had been approved by the Xinjiang lawmakers and being posted on the official website. The rules had demanded all workers to dissuade those who fully cover their bodies, including veiling faces. As a consequence, these people were restricted from entering public places.<sup>96</sup> If the media reports factual, the policy could be seen as an extension of the already existing 'tough' policies applied in the province. Sometimes Islamophobic policies are taken due to a simplistic reason as recently happened in Ningxia, when the administration changed the name of the Aiyi River, which flows through the Ningxia region of China, saying that it sounded too much like Ayesha, the name of one of Prophet Muhammad's wives. The new, more Chinese

and less "Arabic-sounding" name of the river is now 'Diannong', a name for the old capital of Ningxia, being reported by the media as an effort to reduce Islamic influence in the country.<sup>97</sup>

Thirdly, reports released by international media, human rights watch institutions, and international organizations reveal the existence of the re-education camps. In August 2018, a UN human rights panel accused China of holding Uyghurs without charge or trial in "something resembling a massive internment camp, shrouded in secrecy", where abuse and torture are alleged to be commonplace. The UN alleged that Chinese authorities have detained more than one million Uyghurs in camps, and forced as many as two millions to submit to re-education and indoctrination. Gay McDougall, a member of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, said in August 2018 that members of the Uyghur community and other Muslims were being treated as "enemies of the state" solely on the basis of their ethno-religious identity.<sup>98</sup> Human Rights Watch said in September 2018 that it had convincing evidence that the Chinese government was carrying out a 'systematic campaign' of rights abuses against Muslims living in Xinjiang Province, accusing authorities of arbitrary detention,



torture and far-reaching controls over everyday life. The group said that the Xinjiang's Muslim population had been subjected to "forced political indoctrination, collective punishment, restrictions on movement and communications, heightened religious restrictions, and mass surveillance in violation of international human rights law." The group also said that in the camps, the Uyghurs were reportedly forced to learn Mandarin Chinese, espouse the Communist party and denounce Islam. Quoted the Human Rights Watch saying: "The detainees in political education camps are held without any due process rights – neither charged nor put on trial – and have no access to lawyers and family."<sup>99</sup>

Fourthly, official statements from the Chinese government themselves often provide justification for the policy by claiming that the camps do exist, but for a 'good reason'. The Chinese delegation to the UN once clarified that the government sees the threat from Islamist militants in the region as sufficient justification for the grip on the population. Other government officials claim to be putting some citizens of the region through "vocational" courses in order to "rein in extremism". In response to the UN report in August 2018, China's Foreign Ministry

said that there was "neither deliberate targeting at a particular ethnic minority, nor suppressing or restricting the rights or the freedom of religious belief of the Uighur people". Later on, the deputy director of the ruling Communist Party's United Front Work Department confirmed the existence of resettlement or re-education programmes in Xinjiang region. At a UN panel in August 2018, he said: "For those who are convicted of minor offences, we help and teach them in vocational skills in education and training centres, according to relevant laws. There is no arbitrary detention and torture." In September 2018, a spokesman for China's foreign ministry, said in response to the Human Rights Watch report: "The series of measures implemented in Xinjiang are meant to improve stability, development, solidarity and ... crack down on ethnic separatist activities and violent and terrorist crimes."<sup>100</sup> A senior Communist party official said that the sinicisation<sup>101</sup> of religion in the region of Xinjiang must be upheld to promote ethnic solidarity and religious harmony, as said by the head of the Chinese department which oversees ethnic and religious affairs, while on a visit to the province.<sup>102</sup> A month before, in September 2018, Director at the Bureau of Human Rights Affairs of the Chinese state council information office, told media that Chi-



na was “trying to avoid the problems of radicalization Europe had experienced”, statement which was supported by the Chinese state-owned Global Times newspaper claimed that such measures had prevented Xinjiang from turning into “China’s Syria” or “China’s Libya”. Meanwhile, a Chinese Ambassador had accused institutions and people from the West of having pursued double standards, claiming that reports of internment camps were a “misrepresentation of the government’s legitimate efforts to prevent religious extremism and promote de-radicalization”.

The Chinese national government is officially committed to guaranteeing the religious freedom of its citizens, including the Uyghurs, in saying that “China has strong commitment to the protection of human rights and religious freedom”.

Responding to questions about alleged human rights abuses against Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang, Beijing mentioned the social condition of many Uyghurs who are said to have struggled to find jobs because of their poor command of the nation’s official language and lack of skills, the background being cited as “made them vulnerable to the instigation and coercion of terrorism and extremism.” Beijing also ar-

gued that “In light of the situation, Xinjiang has established professional vocational training institutions as the platform, providing courses on China’s common language, legal knowledge, vocational skills, along with de-radicalization education for citizens influenced by extremist ideas.”<sup>103</sup> So far, Beijing has also been very cooperative by showing positive gestures towards the OIC’s measures for clarification and transparency in connection to this sensitive issue.

After all, only if reports by some international media and institutions are factually verifiable, a forced assimilation of an ethnic group based on notions of the mainstream’s superiority, anywhere, is a manifestation of Islamophobia. Even though the local government of Xinjiang might formulate its counter-terrorism strategy for all people living in its territory, the consequences for the affected Muslims could always be disproportionate, since some strategies could have a devastating impact despite the best of intentions. If not carefully designed, and being implemented with due caution, the counter-terrorism strategy might put a burden on the Uyghur people who instead of being able to go about their normal activities in daily life—would live in fear and anxiety.



### 2.3.3. Australia



Negative campaigns by Far Right groups and politicians were remain concerning in Australia during the reviewed period, and at this time, tensions flared between far-right groups and anti-racism protesters in heated scenes in Melbourne. One man was arrested and several scuffles broke out in the city's CBD as the two groups went head to head. Around 70 people marched with the far-right group, chanting "Aussie, Aussie, Aussie", as they walked through Carlton Gardens with their flags aloft. They also sang the national anthem. According to their statement, the event was a: "Day for

proud Australians of all different backgrounds and walks of life to come together in a show of pride to our country, our flag and the Australian way of life." The group was led by known Neo-Nazi and far-right activist Blair Cottrell who once called for a picture of Adolf Hitler to be placed in every classroom across Australia. They were self proclaimed 'patriots' against the 'Islamisation of Australia' and the 'left wing' amongst other things.<sup>104</sup>

In the Australian parliament, Senator Fraser Anning in his speech in August 2018 compared



Muslims with 'poisonous jelly beans', following his racist maiden speech in the Senate seeking immigration restrictions based on race. From the conservative Katter's Australian Party, Anning advocated a return to White Australia policy and called for migration bans on Muslims. Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull joined other politicians and community leaders in criticizing the Queensland Senator for suggesting a final solution to the immigration problem. Turnbull said Anning made a shocking insult to the memory of those murdered in the Holocaust. Following his controversial speech, Anning targeted Muslims once again in an interview to a Sydney radio in saying: "Look, if you can tell me which ones are not going to cause us harm, then fine, that'd be great. But unfortunately if you have a jar of jelly beans and three of them are poisonous, you're not going to try any of them," he told Journalist while referring to Muslims. Anning insisted that Muslims should be stopped from entering Australia.<sup>105</sup>

In parallel, Senator Cory Bernardi again renewed his push for a burqa ban. The Australian Conservatives leader also believed the burqa could be totally banned. The senator, who quit the Liberals in 2017 to establish his own right-wing party, had supported a ban on the Muslim clothing since 2010. In 2014, Senator Bernardi wanted wearing a Burqa banned following anti-terrorism raids in Sydney and Brisbane, describing the head covering as a "shroud of oppression" and a "flag of fundamentalism", adding they were 'not right' in Australia. Four years on, he had continued his push, saying that although he had no issue with headscarfs that cover a woman's hair. Bernardi told media: "It is a direct challenge to our

cultural norms and our societal expectations because Australians expect to see the face of the person they're dealing with and it's the cultural garb of Saudi Arabia and we're not Saudi Arabia." When asked in what way it posed a security risk, Bernardi said: "What's the point of having CCTV and photo ID and biometric security checks of you can't see their face?" Despite the government having previously declared that federal Parliament did not have the power to ban the Burka, Bernardi believed he had found a loophole in national laws that would allow a limited prohibition in locations owned by the Commonwealth. Bernardi tabled his bill in parliament in September 2018.<sup>106</sup>

Meanwhile, in the wake of the knife attack in Melbourne that claimed the life of a person and left two more seriously injured, Prime Minister Scott Morrison made speech somehow blaming Muslims. Morrison slammed all radical teachings, but emphasized that "radical and dangerous ideology of extremist Islam" poses the greatest threat to Australian society. The Forum on Australia's Islamic Relations (FAIR) claimed the perpetrator committed the attack in Melbourne had little to do with Islam and was a mentally ill person suffering from a psychotic episode. The Forum urged the Australian Prime Minister not to make whole Muslim community a 'scapegoat' for a single man's actions. a FAIR spokesperson said: "We demand the withdrawal of his comments and an apology to the Muslim community." Muslim Friendship Association spokesperson, Keysar Trad, branded Morrison's speech as 'very divisive,' claiming that it "plays into the hands of the Islamophobic crowd" since it doesn't differentiate between extremist and normal Islam.<sup>107</sup>



### 2.3.4. India



Bad news came from India as the country deported seven Rohingya Muslim men to Myanmar in October 2018, raising fears of further repatriations among those sheltering in refugee camps in the country, and concern that those returned faced the risk of abuse at the hands of Myanmar authorities. Television pictures showed the men, their faces covered with handkerchiefs, coming out of a police station in the border town of Moreh before being turned over to Myanmar authorities. Police officers from India and Myanmar exchanged a note that said the men were being repatriated to their “country of origin Myanmar” while the

seven sat on a street in Moreh. Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s Hindu nationalist government, who regarded them as illegal aliens and a potential security risk, had ordered that Rohingyas living in small settlements and slums around the country be identified and deported. The seven men had been in a detention center in eastern India since 2012 after being arrested for illegal entry, and were handed over to Myanmar, the government said, after India’s top court rejected a plea to halt the deportation. Around 40,000 Rohingya live in India according to government estimates, most of them in camps, having arrived over the years after



fleeing violence and persecution in Buddhist-majority Myanmar, which denies them citizenship.<sup>108</sup>

Amnesty International India said in a report that there was an alarming number of alleged hate crimes – including assault, rape and murder – were reported against people from marginalized groups in the first six months of 2018. According to the report, a majority of the crimes against these marginalized groups were against Dalits and Muslims. The human rights advocacy group said that as many as 100 cases of hate crimes against people from marginalized groups were reported between January and June this year. Of these, 67 crimes were against Dalits, while 22 were against Muslims. Amnesty International India's 'Halt the Hate' website reported 141 incidents of alleged hate crimes against Dalits and 44 against Muslims in 2017, including 69 incidents of killing that resulted in at least 146 people losing their lives. There were as many as 35 incidents reported of women from these groups, or transgender people, facing sexual violence. Uttar Pradesh was the state with the most such incidents in both 2016 and 2017. In 2016, 237 alleged hate crimes were recorded across the country, with UP, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Gujarat accounting for the most number of incidents.<sup>109</sup>

Meanwhile, news media reported that an Indian village had banned Muslim

practice including sporting beards, praying in public or giving children Islamic names. In the wake of the death of a female calf, allegedly at the hands of a Muslim boy, the elders council (Panchayat) in Titoli village made the decree – while barring the youth from the village for life. The Panchayat held in the Hindu-dominated village also barred Muslim residents, numbering around 800, from offering prayers outside their homes. A mob had attacked the house of a Muslim family in the village in August 2018, accusing them of killing the calf. Two were arrested under the Prohibition of Cow Slaughter Act, 1955, but it was unclear how or why the calf had been killed. However, lawmakers in the north Indian state said they would look into the matter – despite the Muslim community of Titoli apparently respecting the diktat. Rajbir, a local Muslim leader, said the community accepted the decisions of the tribal council to maintain harmony and that they were not austere Muslims. Rajbir said: "We have been keeping Hindu names since Partition and do not wear skull caps or keep beards. Since there is no mosque in the village, we travel around 8-10 km to Rohtak city to offer namaz on Fridays and other occasions".<sup>110</sup>





## 2.4. Other Islamophobic Trends

### 2.4.1. Islamophobic Gestures and Policies against Veil, Hijab, and Burqa



Massive phobia against veil, hijab, and burqa started in France in 2010, when President Nicolas Sarkozy and leaders in both houses of the French Parliament overwhelmingly favored the ban, reasoning that face veils threatened France's secularism, women's rights, and public safety. Later step was when the National Assembly of France on 13 July 2010 proposed a bill which then passed by the Senate of France on 14 September 2010, resulting in the ban on the wearing of face-covering headgear, including masks, burqa, helmets, balaclava, niqabs and other veils covering the face in public places. The key argument supporting this proposal was that face-coverings prevent the clear identification of a person, which was both a security risk, and a social hindrance within a society which relies on facial recognition and

expression in communication. Therefore, as of 11 April 2011, it is illegal in France to wear a face-covering veil or other mask in public places such as the streets, shops, museums, public transportation, and parks. In 2016 several French coastal towns implemented a Burkini ban, a swimming suit for Muslim women, after government officials said that it raised concerns around security.

What was happening in France in 2010 was actually part of a long story of resentment in Europe against this particular dress, which had even started since 2003:

24 September 2003—Germany's federal constitutional court rules in favor of an Afghan-born teacher who wants to wear an Islamic scarf at school, but the court also said that states



can change their laws locally if they want to. The result is that half of Germany's regions go on to ban teachers from wearing headscarves.

3 February 2004—France's national assembly begins debating a bill to ban religious symbols, including Muslim headscarves, Jewish skullcaps and large Christian crosses, from schools.

11 April 2011—under a decree by the then French Prime Minister Francois Fillon, women were banned from wearing the niqab in any public place. Under the first ban, face veils are outlawed virtually anywhere outside women's homes, except when worshipping in a religious place or travelling as a passenger in a car.

31 March 2010—a committee in Belgium votes to implement the first European ban against wearing the burqa and niqab in public, but French government imposes first the ban, as a law banning the full-face veil does not

come into effect in Belgium until July 2011—three months after the French ban.

1 July 2014—The European court of human rights upholds France's burqa ban. The judges said preservation of a certain idea of "living together" is the "legitimate aim" of the French authorities.

22 May 2015—The Dutch cabinet approves a partial ban on face-covering Islamic veils on public transport and in public areas. The ban does not apply to wearing the burqa or the niqab on the street, except when there are specific security reasons.

18 January 2016—the former UK Prime Minister David Cameron said he would back institutions with 'sensible rules' over Muslims wearing full-face veils, but ruled out a full public ban.

18 August 2016—France's Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, defended municipal bans







on body covering burkini swimwear designed for Muslim women after mayors imposed burkini bans in several seaside towns including Cannes, Villeneuve-Loubet and Sisc on the island of Corsica.

6 December 2016—The German chancellor, Angela Merkel, endorses a partial ban on the burqa and the niqab.

30 January 2017—Austria's ruling coalition agrees to prohibit full-face veils such as the burqa and the niqab in courts and schools. It also pledged to investigate banning headscarves for women employed in public services, in a move designed to hold the ruling coalition together by placating the anti-immigration Freedom party.

14 March 2017—in its first decision on the headscarf issue the European court of justice rules that employers can bar staff from wearing visible religious symbols.

By now there are at least 12 (twelve) European countries who have banned veil, headscarf, hijab, niqab, and burqa i.e. France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Bulgaria, Latvia, Estonia, and Albania. More were on the way with intensive debates are ongoing in some countries, and the number is predicted to grow fast, especially after the decision taken on the 14th of March 2017 by the European Court of Justice (ECJ), which ruled that employers/companies could ban staff from wearing these particular clothes. A country would be followed by another, made the ban part of their national law, despite the clear manifestation of social discrimination behind such a policy.

Particular on this issue, the Observatory monitored situations during the reviewed period as the following:

Norway had become the next European





country to ban Niqab and Burka. In a vote in parliament in June 2018, a bill was passed banning clothing that partially or fully obscured the face from being worn around schools. The ban applied to teachers, students, staff at daycare centres and anyone in a 'teaching situation'. Norway's parliamentary procedure saw voting spread over three days and the bill was backed by a majority in two rounds over the three days. Party representatives from the Socialist Left, Red and Green parties voted against the bill, while the anti-immigration Progress Party reviled in the passing. A similar ban was passed by Scandinavian neighbour Denmark a week before and it was met with criticism by many human rights groups.<sup>111</sup>

By a margin of 44 to 31 votes, Dutch parliament in June 2018 passed a law banning full-face veils in public spaces such as government buildings, a move aimed at restricting the

traditionally-Muslim garment. The ban passed included garments such as the Burqa and the Niqab, and encompassed public spaces such as public transportation, schools, government offices and hospitals, as reported by Media. The Dutch upper house of parliament said in a statement: "The Bill proposes a legal ban on wearing clothing that completely covers the face or only shows the eyes, in educational institutions, on public transport, in government institutions and hospitals." Police officers could also ask travelers walking on the sidewalk to remove veils for identification, though veils were allowed on public streets under the law. Far-right Dutch politicians hailed the vote as a victory in their battle to "de-Islamize" the country. Senator Marjolein Faber-Van de Klashorst of Freedom Party said: "A historical day because this is the first step to de-Islamise the Netherlands." Neighboring Denmark banned full-face





veils from all public spaces a month earlier, becoming the first European country to do so.<sup>112</sup>

The Swiss region of St Gallen had voted in favour of a burqa ban, prohibiting all face-covering garments in public spaces. In a referendum in September 2018, nearly 67 percent of voters approved the ban, the second region in Switzerland to do so after Ticino two years earlier. Three other Swiss cantons - Zurich, Solothurn and Glarus - had rejected introducing such bans in recent years. The referendum was held after local parties, Green Party and Young Socialists, demanded a vote following the passage of a law in St Gallen parliament in 2017. That law stated that "any person who renders themselves unrecognizable by covering their face in a public space, and thus endangers public security or social and religious peace will be fined". Drafted following an up-

roar in the canton over a girl who wore a face veil to school, the law did not define when a woman wearing veil constitutes a danger. In 2017, the Swiss government opposed a nationwide burqa ban, saying it should be up to the regions to determine if such measures were appropriate. A national referendum on the issue was expected in 2019 after the right-wing Swiss People's Party gathered 100,000 signatures required to put any subject to vote under Switzerland's famous direct democratic system. In 2009, Switzerland banned the construction of minarets at mosques in a similar referendum, attracting worldwide attention.<sup>113</sup>

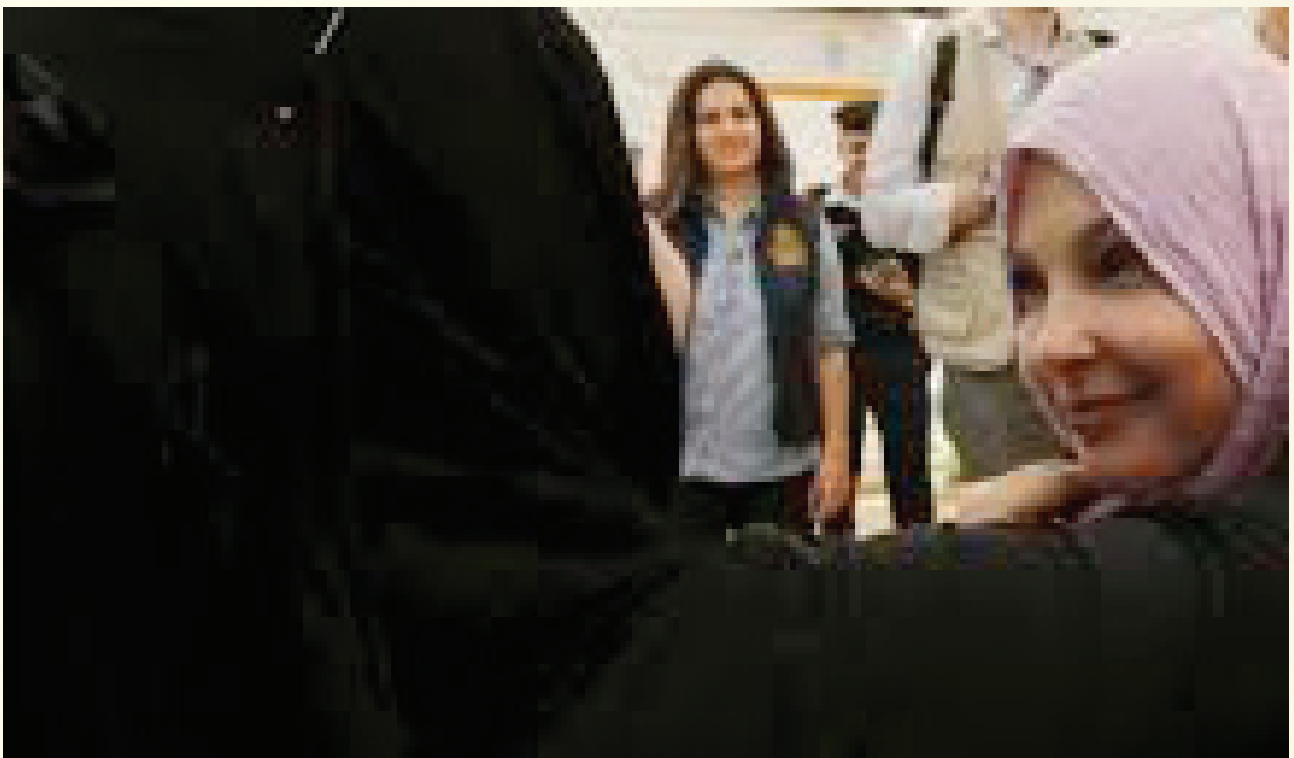
Australian Senator Cory Bernardi had again renewed his push for a burqa ban. The conservatives figure also believed the burqa could be totally banned in the ACT and NT. The senator, who quitted the Liberals in 2017 to establish



his own right-wing party, had supported a ban on the Muslim clothing since 2010. In 2014, Senator Bernardi wanted wearing a Burqa banned following anti-terrorism raids in Sydney and Brisbane, describing the head covering as a “shroud of oppression” and a “flag of fundamentalism”, adding they were ‘not right’ in Australia. Four years on, he had continued his push, saying that although he had no is-



sue with headscarfs that cover a woman’s hair. Bernardi told media: “It is a direct challenge to our cultural norms and our societal expectations because Australians expect to see the face of the person they’re dealing with and it’s the cultural garb of Saudi Arabia and we’re not Saudi Arabia.” When asked in what way it posed a security risk, Bernardi said: “What’s the point of having CCTV and photo ID







and biometric security checks of you can't see their face?" Despite the government having previously declared that federal Parliament did not have the power to ban the Burka, Bernardi believed he had found a loophole in national laws that would allow a limited prohibition in locations owned by the Commonwealth. Bernardi tabled his bill in parliament in September 2018.<sup>114</sup>

A senior Church of England priest had called for a partial ban on Burqas in public as he backed Boris Johnson's criticism of the practice. Michael Nazir-Ali, former Bishop of Rochester, said the garments should be outlawed in places where people interact. Nazir-Ali acknowledged that some women felt the garments made them more observant Muslims. He argued that the veil was also being "weaponised to impose what they consider to be Is-

lamic character on communities and even nations". He said that the dress had implications for women's freedom and also for "integration and social cohesion". He also said widespread veil-wearing increased isolation and segregation. There were also security issues, he said: "We have all seen how even male terrorists have escaped arrest by donning a burka and making an effective getaway."<sup>115</sup>

Polish lawmaker Dominik Tarczynski said that he supports the burqa ban, stepping in the ongoing debate. He told media that Poland should not allow the construction of another mosque, until the European country can build a cathedral in Saudi Arabia, stating the relationship between the Islamic world and the West was presently unbalanced. The Polish minister Tarczynski said that Islamic face veils "should be banned in the same way the Christian cross



is banned in Saudi Arabia. We're happy to have it once they agree for Poland to build a cathedral in Saudi Arabia. It's very simple, either we are equal, we are partners, we are the same human beings — or they feel they are better than others," the Polish minister said. Throwing his weight behind the burqa ban in a few European countries, he said that it was partly due to security reason and partly because of storing parity between the Islamic world and the West, that the Burqa was often used as disguise by suicide bombers, child molesters, and armed robbers across the globe.<sup>116</sup>

Algerian authorities banned women from wearing the full-face veil at work due to problems of identification. The government released

a statement on 18 October titled 'The duties of employees and public servants in dress codes' insisting women to abide by the security obligations. The statement said: "Women are obliged to respect the rules and requirements of security and communication which is at the level of their interests, and requires the recognition of their identity in an automatic and permanent manner, especially in the workplace." The government also announced before the start of the academic year that female students were not allowed to wear the full-face veil during exams as it could be used as a method of cheating. It also banned the saying of "In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful" from school textbooks and reduced the school







hours located to religious studies. The National Coordination for Teachers of Islamic Sciences in Algeria noted that they were efforts “to damage educational subjects related to our national identity and to symbols of Islam.” However, Algerian Minister for Religious Affairs Mohamed Aissa expressed his support for the government’s reforms, noting that they were done “to put a stop to fanaticism and extremism.”<sup>117</sup>

Egypt might follow the step of its neighbor: Algeria. A member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House of Representatives, MP Ghada Agamy, had proposed to the Egyptian government to prevent women from wearing full-face veils in government workplaces. Agamy stressed that taking personal freedom as an excuse to wear the full-face veil was no

longer as convincing as it was in the past, as this personal freedom depended on the violation of freedoms for others. She explained that all institutions, especially the government, had absolute freedom to impose their own rules of work and workers had to abide by the order. She urged the Government and the House of Representatives to take action to implement a similar resolution as in Algeria.<sup>118</sup>

Ajami submitted a bill in the Egyptian parliament calling for a fine of 1,000 Egyptian pounds (\$56) for women who defy the proposed ban. The fine would double for repeat offenders. Ajami stressed to the press that the purpose of the bill was “to support the state’s efforts in fighting terrorism.” The Bill stated that the burqa would be prohibited in Egyptian public spaces





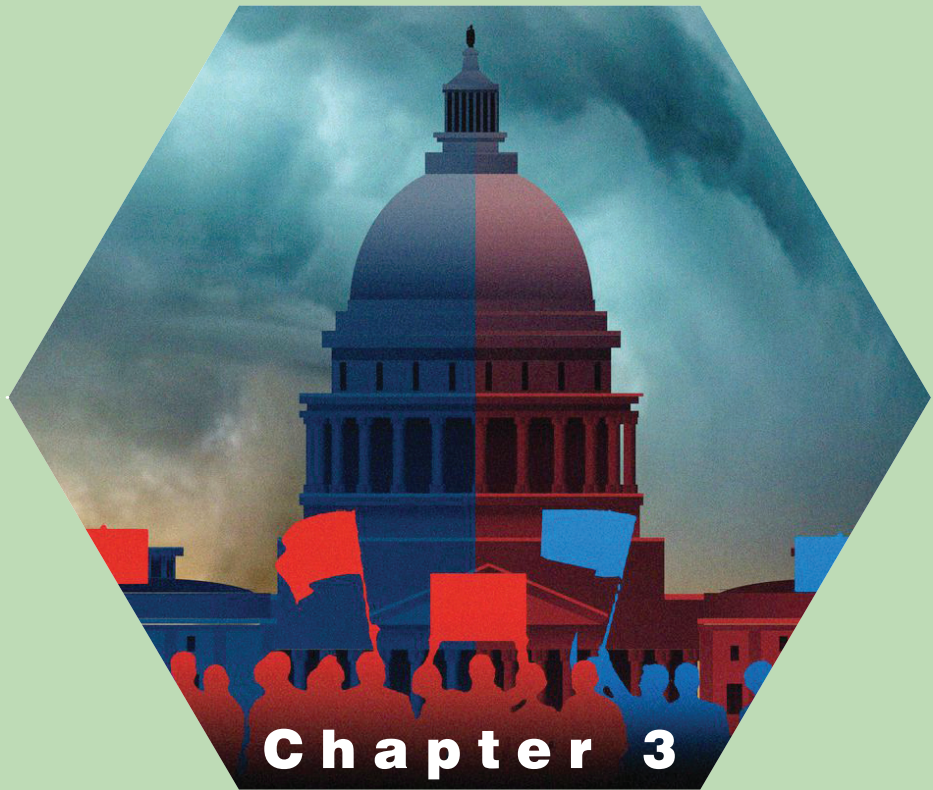
“at any time and under any circumstances.” Public spaces would include hospitals, health clinics, schools, cinemas, theaters, public libraries, museums, and government buildings, among others.<sup>119</sup>

Nigeria’s apex Muslim body delivered a statement in November 2018, a day after nine pupils were told to leave a school in the southwest Oyo State, saying: “Shutting out Muslim girls from school for wearing headscarves amounts to unacceptable religious bigotry and a violation of the Constitution.” The nine Muslim teenagers were prevented from entering the International School Ibadan (ISI) compound because they wore headscarves, barely a week after the government in southwestern Lagos officially approved the wearing of headscarves

by Muslim girls.

The government decision came two years after its circular banning headscarves was struck down on appeal. In a statement, the Nigerian Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs (NSCIA) said the action of the school, located in the premises of the country’s premier University of Ibadan, amounted to official discrimination against Muslims and threatened to sue the violators. NSCIA spokesman Salihu Shehu said in a statement: “The denial of the Muslim girls of the right to use their hijab is just a ring in a long chain of institutionalised religious discrimination against Muslims in the school, which should ordinarily be a centre of excellence where learning, probity, excellence and character are respected.”<sup>120</sup>





## Chapter 3



# POSITIVE DEVELOP- MENTS



The Observatory noted with pleasure that during the covered period, there were efforts in many countries around the world to promote harmony and tolerance, while countered anti-Islam sentiments and other Islamophobic activities, of which the Observatory would consider as positive signs towards combatting Islamophobia and incitement of hatred and violence towards Islam and Muslims. The following instances of positive trends are worth mentioning:

### 3.1. Public Policy

On the issue of Rohingya, a U.N. Human Rights Council voted in September 2018 to set up a body to prepare evidence of human rights abuses in Myanmar, including possible genocide, for any future prosecution. The 47-mem-

ber Council voted by 35 votes to three, with seven abstentions, in favor of a resolution brought by the European Union and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. China, the Philippines and Burundi voted against the move, whose





backers said it was supported by more than 100 countries. Myanmar Ambassador said the resolution was based on the report of a U.N. fact-finding mission (FFM) that his government had categorically rejected, and which was unbalanced, one-sided and encouraged disunity of the country. The resolution sets up a body to “collect, consolidate, preserve and analyze evidence of the most serious international crimes and violations of international law committed in Myanmar since 2011, and to prepare files in order to facilitate and expedite fair and independent criminal proceedings”. The new agency was to work closely with any future prosecution brought by the ICC, which said that it had jurisdiction over alleged deportations of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar to Bangladesh.<sup>121</sup>

Later on, in November 2018, the United Nations committee endorsed a resolution expressing grave concern and strongly condemning all violations and abuses of human rights against Rohingyas in Myanmar. It also reiterated deep distress at reports of unarmed Rohingyas were still being subjected to excessive use of force and rights violations by Myanmar’s military and security forces, including killings and rapes. The UN Committee measured urgent calls



on Myanmar government to end discrimination and provide a path to citizenship for the Rohingyas. The latest report of UN said 669 children were reported killed and 39 maimed in Myanmar since August last year, and a large majority of them were Rohingyas. Stéphane Dujarric, spokesperson for the secretary general, said: “These findings are in line with what other UN bodies have found, confirming killing, maiming, and rape, for which Myanmar’s armed forces have already been listed on the Secretary General’s Annual Report from last





was to launch a preliminary investigation into the deportations of hundreds of thousands of Rohingya Muslims from Myanmar into Bangladesh. The chief prosecutor of ICC Fatou Bensouda announced. She said she would look at reports of “a number of alleged coercive acts having resulted in the forced displacement of the Rohingya people, including deprivation of fundamental rights, killing, sexual violence, enforced disappearance, destruction and looting”. She said Myanmar’s military had been accused of widespread human rights violations, including rape, murder, torture and the burning of Rohingya villages – leading about 700,000 Rohingya to flee to neighbouring Bangladesh since August 2017.

She began investigations soon after

ICC judges gave her authorisation to investigate the deportations despite Myanmar not being a member state of the court. Meanwhile, UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar had made recommendations that the Myanmar military should be investigated and prosecuted in an international criminal tribunal for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.<sup>123</sup>

year.” The resolution on the human rights situation in Myanmar, co-sponsored by the European Union, Canada and the 57-member Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to the UN General Assembly’s Third Committee - Social, Humanitarian and Cultural, won 142 nations. In addition to Myanmar, China and Russia, seven other countries voted against it and 26 nations, including Japan and India, abstained.<sup>122</sup>

Another positive development at international level, the International criminal court (ICC)

In France, the European Court of Human Rights ruled in October 2018 that an Austrian



woman's criminal conviction and fine for her statements accusing the Prophet Muhammad of pedophilia did not breach her right to free speech. The woman had held seminars on Islam in 2008 and 2009 for the far-right Freedom Party where she discussed the prophet's marriage to his wife Aisha, a child at the time, and implied that he was a pedophile. An Austrian court convicted her of disparaging religious doctrines in 2011 and fined her 480 Euros, a judgment that was upheld on two appeals. Stating that the court had found that "the applicant's statements had been likely to arouse justified indignation in Muslims and amounted to a generalization without factual basis", the ECtHR said that the woman's comments could not be covered by the freedom of expression. The woman's statements "were not phrased in a neutral manner aimed at being an objec-

tive contribution to a public debate concerning child marriages," the ECHR held, adding that the moderate fine imposed on her could not be considered disproportionate.<sup>124</sup>

In Japan, a Tokyo-based company created the 'Mobile Mosque' for Muslim visitors ahead of the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. The heavy-duty truck expanded into a 48-square-metre large room that had the capacity to accommodate up to 50 people. The space was also equipped with prayer mats and a water basin for ritual pre-worship cleansing. The mosque-on-wheels, which was debuted at Toyota stadium in western Japan, would give people a place to worship when they attend events. The initiative aimed at ensuring that there would be no shortage of mosques for Muslim visitors during the Tokyo Olympics. The Mobile Mosque Project planned to focus on international sporting







events like the Olympics and the World Cup in the future. The company hoped it could be used as a tool to bridge cultural barriers and promotes world peace.<sup>125</sup>

In Germany, in a country where the debate over “who belongs?” had deeply divided Ms Merkel’s government, fuelled massive demonstrations and propelled the rise of anti-immigrant populism, students confront versions of that question in their personal lives: Do I belong, too? Can I be German and a Muslim? Public schools in some of Germany’s most populous cities were helping such students come up with answers in a counterintuitive setting: Islam class. The classes, taught by and intended for Muslim students, were first launched in the early 2000s and now were offered as electives in nine of Germany’s 16 states, by more than 800 public primary and secondary schools, ac-

cording to the research network Mediendienst Integration. They include lessons on the Quran, the history of Islam, comparative religion and ethics. Often, discussions shift to the students’ identity struggles or feelings of alienation. Germany had the European Union’s second-largest Muslim population after France. In 2016, 4.95 million people, or 6.1 per cent of the German population, were Muslim. The country’s leaders had expressed an ambivalent view of Islam. Seehofer’s said statement “Islam does not belong to Germany” came just months after the Islam-bashing AfD entered parliament. Ms Merkel denounced the statement and ruled out sharing power with the AfD. Nevertheless, the AfD had steadily gained support over the latest two years. On 14 October, it scored the biggest electoral gains of any party in Bavaria, Germany’s most populous state. Some Ger-





man politicians were pushing for an expansion of Islam classes in public schools as a way to encourage the cultural integration of Muslim students and to promote an interpretation of Islam that highlights German values.<sup>126</sup>

In Canada, the York Region District School Board had formally apologized for “discriminatory and disrespectful” anti-Muslim social media posts made by a former principal at a Markham elementary school. In a statement on its website it said: “The board would like to apologize to the school community for failing to uphold the shared values of respecting human rights, inclusivity and student safety.” Ghada Sadaka was the principal at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School when she shared a number of Islamophobic and anti-refugee posts on her Facebook page, sometimes adding commen-

tary of her own to videos or articles. The posts dated back to 2015, but the issue surfaced in 2016 after parents brought them to the attention of the board. Sadaka no longer works in a school but remains in a centrally assigned role within the board. At the time, the postings sparked considerable public outrage. Parents at the school eventually wrote a letter to the education minister condemning the board’s handling of the incident, alleging the investigation lacked transparency and instruments for accountability. Following more allegations of racism and other dysfunction within York region schools made shortly after the Sadaka incident, then-education minister Mitzie Hunter initiated an external review of the board. The process ended with the departure of the board’s former director.<sup>127</sup>



### 3.2. Court Decisions against Islamophobes

In the U.S., a Missouri man received a two-year federal prison sentence in July 2018 for leaving a series of messages threatening to kill, maim, behead and set on fire the members of the Islamic Society of Augusta. Between 22 June and 8 August 2017, Howard called the mosque eight times and left more than 20 minutes of voicemail messages, said Edward Ahmed Mitchell, executive director of the Georgia chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). Howard said at the hearing he was embarrassed and ashamed. He said he was ignorant to believe that all Muslims were like the 9/11 attackers or the people in the YouTube videos he watched who beheaded children.<sup>128</sup>

Also in the U.S., three members of an Illinois militia group accused of bombing a

Minnesota mosque were to have their federal cases consolidated for trial in Minnesota. Michael Hari, Michael McWhorter and Joe Morris were arrested in March 2018 in connection with 2017's explosion at Dar Al-Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington. The men faced federal hate crime charges. They were also charged with federal crimes in Illinois, including the attempted bombing of an abortion clinic.<sup>129</sup>

Still in the U.S., the Man who set fire to the Victoria Islamic Center mosque in 2017 was sentenced to more than 24 years in prison. A federal jury found Marq Vincent Perez guilty in July 2017 of hate crime, arson and explosives charges. He was sentenced to 294 months in prison, according to the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of Texas. Prosecutor Sharad Khandelwal said during the trial that







Perez's "rabid hatred" of Muslims led him to set fire to the mosque in January 2017. In handing down the sentence, Senior U.S. District Judge John Rainey said the court was sending a message to Perez and others like him. FBI Agent-in-Charge Edward Michel in a written statement said: "Mr. Perez sought to provoke terror within the tranquil space of the Victoria Islamic Center. Today's sentencing illustrates that hate crimes will not be tolerated. No one in this country should feel afraid to openly practice their religion or express their beliefs." During the trial, testimony detailed how Perez broke into the mosque a week before setting it on fire. A witness who was with Perez the night of the fire talked about how excited Perez was when he saw the mosque go up in flames. Witnesses testified that Perez had often used anti-Muslim slurs and said he would burn the mosque down again if it was rebuilt.<sup>130</sup>

Another positive signs from the U.S., the

Coast Guard said that it had removed a member from its Hurricane Florence response team in September 2018 after he made an "OK" hand gesture on live TV that the service branch deemed offensive. The unidentified team member was caught looking into the camera and then swiftly making the hand gesture, prompting a backlash on social media. The hand signal was seen in the background of MSNBC's live interview with Sector Charleston Commanding Officer Capt. John Reed, who was providing an update on actions taken by the Coast Guard in response to Hurricane Florence. Many social media users called for the firing of the individual, accusing him of making a so-called 'white power' hate symbol. The agency immediately responded to the outcry and distanced from the controversy. There was no clear consensus whether the "OK" hand gesture constitutes a hate symbol. While it had been adopted by some fringe far-right figures, it had also been



commonly used by many Trump supporters. Earlier in the month, liberal activists accused a Jewish-Mexican former Trump administration official, Zina Gelman Bash, of making the “white power” hand gesture during the confirmation hearing of Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh, prompting derogatory descriptions of her as a “neo-Nazi” or “white supremacist.”<sup>131</sup>

Further in the U.S., a senior Army official slated to become deputy director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, then lost the job after media inquired about the Islamophobic Facebook posts. Guy Sands-Pingot was a former Army Brigadier and current director of Human Capital in the Army Reserve was slated to become second in command at USCIS in September, until media asked the agency about a few of his Islamophobic Facebook posts. One article Sands-Pingot posted to his Facebook page in 2015 read: “If you wipe your butt with your bare hand but consider bacon to be un-

clean, you may be Muslim.” Two years before, he wrote that it was a “fantasy to deny an Islamic threat to the non-islamic world and peoples. This is similar to saying crimes committed by nazi storm troopers had nothing to do with the Nazi Party even though every propaganda point of the Nazi Party political and social platform clearly spelled out what they would do and why they would do it, and to whom they would do it to.” USCIS that the candidate is no longer slated to commence employment at USCIS.<sup>132</sup>

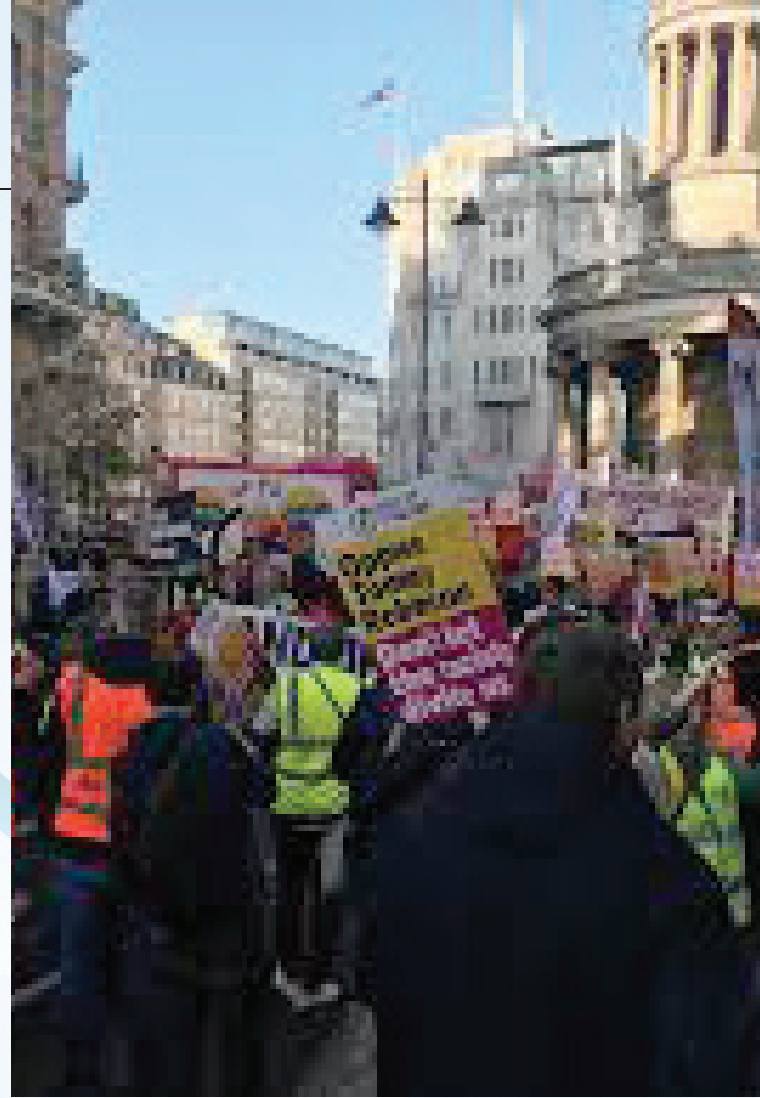
Meanwhile, a meatpacker company agreed to pay \$1.5 million to 138 Somali-American Muslim workers who were fired from their jobs at a Colorado plant after they were refused prayer breaks, a federal anti-discrimination agency said in September 2018. Cargill Meat Solutions, a division of Minnesota-based agribusiness company Cargill Corp., also agreed to train managers and hourly workers in accommodating Muslim employees’ prayer breaks





at its Fort Morgan beef processing plant, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission said. Cargill denied wrongdoing but agreed to settle to avoid further litigation. The dispute dated back to the firings of the workers in late 2016 after management rescinded policies allowing Muslim employees to take short breaks for prayer. In 2017, the agency found that the workers had been harassed and discriminated against for protesting the unannounced policy change that denied them opportunities for obligatory prayer. Hundreds of Somali-Americans worked at the plant in Fort Morgan, northeast of Denver. In a related announcement, a Teamsters union local that was supposed to represent the workers would pay them \$153,000 to settle discrimination complaints.<sup>133</sup>

In the U.K., two people with a hatred of Islam tied up and tortured a Muslim convert in a disturbing filmed attack. Emma Storey and Lois Evans had been jailed for their assault on the vulnerable victim. Footage of the distressing incident was played at Teesside Crown Court in August 2018 where Evans was jailed for three years and four months and Storey got two years and eight months. The court heard that Evans had threatened to use a power drill on the man's kneecaps and feet, screaming that she hated Muslims. The young victim was repeatedly punched and had his knees smashed with a hammer, while his hair was cut out and wood filler was put into his mouth. Storey hesitated when Evans threatened to kill the man, the court heard. Speaking after the case Bethany Raine of the CPS said: "This was a particularly nasty attack on a vulnerable man,



motivated in part by Evans' anger towards his faith."<sup>134</sup>

In the U.K., a man appeared in court accused of planning to target a south London mosque in a terror attack. Steven Bishop of Thornton Heath was charged with preparing an act of terrorism. He appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court and spoke only to confirm his personal details and give his nationality as white British. He was also charged with making a record of information likely to be useful to preparing an act of terrorism, namely handwritten notes that allegedly set out how to construct high explosives.<sup>135</sup>

Also, a court was heard an 'anti-Islamic' terrorist suspect was planning to blow up a mosque in response to the killing of an eight-year-old girl who died in the Manchester bombing in 2017. Steven Bishop from south London



was accused of tampering with fireworks with the intention of setting them off with a detonator he purchased from the dark web, a collection of websites operating on an encrypted network. Bishop appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court in November 2018.<sup>136</sup>

In the Netherlands, a man from Lingewaard, south of Arnhem, was suspected of planning a terrorist attack on Muslims, get arrested and had been remanded in custody since late May 2018. He appeared in court in Zutphen for a pro-forma hearing in September. The investigation began after the department was tipped off that the man felt violence against Muslims was justified and that he was working on some form of attack. Officials were also told the man was able to get hold of a quantity of explosives, the public prosecution department said. How-

ever, officials had not yet found any evidence that the man had concrete plans for an attack, despite seizing an alarm pistol and a large quantity of live bullets from his home.<sup>137</sup>

In France, the suspects included a retired police officer, who was the alleged leader of the group. France remained on high alert following a wave of terrorist attacks which had killed more than 240 people since 2015. Officials urged people not to confuse the actions of radicalized individuals with those of France's estimated six million Muslims – because of which anti-Islamic violence was on the rise. The 'Guerre de France' website of the operational forces action depicted an apocalyptic battle scene under the Eiffel Tower, and claimed to prepare "French citizen-soldiers for combat on national territory".<sup>138</sup>

In Austria, a police officer in Austria was accused of making an Islamophobic remark towards a group of young Austrian Muslim girls. The officer allegedly made the remark when a 20-member group of young women were passing through passport control at Vienna international airport. Esma Aiad, one of the members of the group, told media that they were returning from a visit to Istanbul and Cappadocia when a police officer at passport control asked two veiled members of the group: "They didn't marry you off forcefully in Istanbul, right?" The girls tried to talk to the officer but he refused to talk or give his badge number and also threatened one of their group members, she added. A police spokesman said they would investigate the incident and question the officer about the alleged racist remark.<sup>139</sup>





### 3.3. Positive Views on Islam

In the U.S., a Maryland councilman apologized to the president of a local Muslim council for sharing Islamophobic social media posts. The president of the Anne Arundel County Muslim Council, Rudwan Abu-Rumman, told media that county Councilman John Grasso texted him to apologize and also planned to meet in person. Grasso shared several posts on Facebook in September 2018 about Muslims and Islam, including one that said “Share if you think President Trump should ban Islam in American Schools.” Grasso had since deleted the posts.<sup>140</sup>

In the U.K., efforts to tackle hate crime in the Bradford district was showcased during National Hate Crime Awareness Week in October 2018. Bradford Council, West Yorkshire Police and Bradford Hate Crime Alliance worked together to reinforce their commitment to tackle hate crime in all its forms. Coun Abdul Jabar, Bradford Council’s Executive Member for Neighbourhoods and Community Safety, said: “Every member of our community should be able to live their lives safe and free from verbal, physical or emotional attack – wherever they live, learn, work or play in this district. By working together we can build community cohesion and not fall prey to the forces that seek to divide us,

such as Islamophobia.” Chief Superintendent Scott Bisset, Bradford Police District Commander, said: “The law is clear. Hate crime is exactly that, a crime. West Yorkshire Police stands shoulder to shoulder with other partners and the public to tackle the pernicious criminal behaviour.” Dr Martin Baines, the chair of Bradford Hate Crime Alliance, said: “Hate crime in any form has no place in the district. We can, by working together, continue to effectively tackle hate crime in our district. Working with partners we can work towards eradicating all forms of hate crime including Islamophobia.” Bradford Council was also working with partners including Bradford Council for Mosques to formulate a nationally-recognised definition of Islamophobia, which was robust and accepted by the Muslim community.<sup>141</sup>





### 3.4. Counter-balances on Far Rights

In Europe, in the wake of growing racism across Europe, a project to counter Islamophobia was launched in the European Parliament in July 2018. Experts and academics from across Europe gathered at the parliament for the launch of the two-year Counter-Islamophobia Kit (CIK) project funded by the European Commission's Directorate of Justice. They called on member states and policymakers to play a more active role in the fight against Islamophobia and strengthen legal procedures on the issue. The project reviewed dominant anti-Muslim narratives and compares counter-narratives in eight EU members states i.e. France, Germany, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Portugal, Greece, and the U.K. It outlined 10 counter-narratives that must be prioritized in Europe:<sup>142</sup>

- Challenging and contextualizing constructions of Muslim 'threat'
- Building inclusive nations: challenging exclusive and discriminatory national projects
- Cultural compatibility and conviviality: challenging the narrative separation of cultural and ethnic groups
- Elaborating plurality while challenging narratives of Muslim singularity
- Challenging narratives of sexism

- Building inclusive futures
- De-racializing the state: challenging institutional narratives
- Emphasizing humanity and Muslim normalization: challenging narratives of division
- Creating Muslim space(s)
- Challenging distorted representation: verity and voice

Also in Europe, positive views spread saying that Europe shouldn't fall into the trap of scapegoating Muslims and migrants and blaming them for the EU's crisis, as that would further divide Europe instead of enabling the continent to live together in a safe society. Since the last few years, public discourses across Europe had been saying that 'Muslims were a problem', justifying the adoption of policies, legislation and practices that put European core demo-





cratic and fundamental rights principles at risk. Counter-terrorism and counter-radicalisation measures adopted in some EU countries had led to serious human rights violations, including racial profiling by law enforcement authorities, police abuses during raids and the use of administrative restrictions on the basis of vague and discriminatory criteria. In the United Kingdom for instance, surveillance cameras were placed in so-called 'Muslim areas' and social workers were required to denounce 'radical' behaviour, often defined by strict observance and rarely linked to any criminal offence. As a result, many innocent Muslims are targeted mainly on the basis of their religious practice, with no evidence pointing to their involvement in any criminal act. These laws and policies ultimately also had a negative impact on the rights of all Europeans, whether it was restricting freedom of expression, increasing surveillance or targeting human rights defenders. They were fuelling a generalised suspicion and marginalisation of Muslims following terrorist attacks and the current migration context in Europe. Also, representing Muslims as the "enemy from within" who needed to be controlled and policed, and as threats to "European values" and the "European way of life", which in practice actually only mean that diversity was not welcome in Europe. There has been a strong trend in European and national policies and practices to racially define terrorism and radicalisation by over-focusing on Muslim populations, whilst completely ignoring far-right terrorism and radicalisation for instance.<sup>143</sup>

Still in Europe, a Far Right figure said that the plans to forge a united right-wing populist movement led by Steve Bannon ahead of

2019's European Parliament election "will not succeed." Bannon said he intended to set up a Brussels-based foundation, The Movement, to advise and coordinate the continent's various right-wing parties and political groups ahead of the 2019 Europe-wide ballot. But according to Alexander Gauland who leads Alternative for Germany (AfD), Bannon scheme "will not succeed as the interests of the anti-establishment parties in Europe are quite different. I do not see any great opportunities for cooperation. We're not in America." Gauland's party — which was part of the Europe of Freedom and Direct Democracy group in the European assembly, alongside UKIP and Italy's 5Stars — took a hardline approach to immigration and Islam like a number of its far-right peers across the Continent, but diverged on other issues such as economic policy and EU membership. Other right-wing political fig-





ures had also pushed back against Bannon's scheme to push an anti-establishment, Euroskeptpic agenda ahead of the election. Jérôme Rivière, a member of France's far-right National Rally had said: "Bannon is American and has no place in a European political party. We reject any supra-national entity and are not participating in the creation of anything with Bannon." Gauland acknowledged that AfD co-leader Alice Weidel had met Bannon once, but insisted cooperation with other right-wing parties took place on a bilateral basis.<sup>144</sup>

In France, the counter-terrorism forces detained a group of suspected far-right radicals who were plotting an attack on "people of Muslim faith." Firearms as well as homemade explosives were found during the raid. Ten people suspected were detained in a large-scale security operation on 24 June by the General Directorate for Internal Security (DGSI) as part of

a counter-terrorism investigation into a planned attack on Muslims. The raids were conducted in the Paris region, the western regions of Haute-Vienne and Charente-Maritime as well as on the island of Corsica. The suspects had an "ill-defined plan to commit a violent act targeting people of the Muslim faith," a source close to the investigation told Media. The members of the group claimed they wanted to counter "the threat of radical Islam" in France, Media said, adding that the suspects regularly trained in shooting clubs as they apparently prepared to carry out their attacks. They also reportedly prepared caches of weapons, ammunition, and food for their families in case of a major crisis. It was the second major far-right conspiracy thwarted by the French security forces in less than a year. In October 2017, counter-terrorism police arrested 10 people in the Paris and Marseille areas over a suspected plot to attack mosques, migrants, and even former presidential candidate Jean-Luc Melenchon.<sup>145</sup>

President Emmanuel Macron himself took a position against the move of Europe's far-right politicians, after the Italy's Matteo Salvini and Hungary's Viktor Orban pledged to work together to obstruct his European agenda on migration. At a joint press conference in August 2018, Mr Orban said France's premier wanted to throw open Europe's doors to migrants, while Mr Salvini accused him of hypocrisy for talking about European co-operation but ignoring Rome's pleas for help. Mr Orban and Mr Salvini said would they work together before 2019 elections for the European Union's parliament to oppose what they saw as a pro-migration group of countries led by the French president. When asked about Mr Salvini's and



Mr Orban's comments, Mr Macron said: "It is clear that today a strong opposition is building up between nationalists and progressives and I will yield nothing to nationalists and those who advocate hate speech. So if they wanted to see me as their main opponent, they were right to do so." Mr Macron is a pro-European leader who had sought further integration of EU nations. Mr Salvini's League is allied to Marine Le Pen's far-right party while Mr Orban is part of the centre-right European People's Party (EPP).<sup>146</sup>

In the Netherlands, Prime Minister Mark Rutte described the Mohammed cartoon competition organised by anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders as 'not respectful' and 'provocative' but said that he supported free speech. Rutte said at his weekly press conference: "The aim is to provoke rather than to force a debate about Islam. Wilders is a politician who provokes and he is free to do that." Wilders announced the winners of the competition in the high-security PVV offices in The Hague parliamentary complex supposedly in November 2018. Despite supporting free speech, Rutte said that "not everything that can be said, has to be said. At the same time, people in the Netherlands, whether Christian or Muslim, should be able to take a hit." Foreign minister Stef Blok also as-



sured foreign governments that the competition was nothing to do with the cabinet.<sup>147</sup>

Also in the Netherlands, a mosque authority wrote to Twitter in November 2018 to formally request anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders be removed from the platform. The Turkish Islamic Cultural Federation (TICF), which oversaw 144 mosques in the Netherlands, said Wilders had violated the social platform's rules of conduct with his postings of hate-crime expressions. The letter pointed toward specific examples of far-right Wilders' tweets, including one from March 15 that labels Islam as "terror," "misogyny," "homophobia," "honor killing," "animal suffering," "injustice," "slavery," "deadly." The letter also pointed a tweet from September 2017, where Wilders referred to the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH) as a "pedophile, mass murderer, terrorist and maniac." The same tweet included a depiction of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). On Facebook, the federation said it would explore legal options should Twitter refused its request to suspend Wilders. In response to the letter, Wilders tweeted a self portrait with tape covering his mouth, indicating he felt he could be silenced by a potential ban.<sup>148</sup>

In the U.K., counter-protesters have gathered in December 2018 to oppose a Tommy Robinson-led, Brexit-based Ukip march in Lon-







don. Groups opposing the far right, such as Unite Against Fascism and Momentum, were leading the opposition march with backing from figures such as Labour's shadow chancellor John McDonnell. The number of counter-protesters vastly outnumbered the amount of pro-Brexit marchers, around 15,000 people expressed their opposition, while there were only an estimated 3,000 supporting Robinson. Other opposition groups that joined the counter-demonstration include Stand Up to Racism, Socialists Against Antisemitism, and the Feminist Anti-Fascist Assembly, who held a banner reading: "The enemy doesn't arrive by boat. He arrives by limousine. No to fortress Britain."<sup>149</sup>

Meanwhile, Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth said that schools in the U.K. should take pupils on trips to mosques in an attempt to tackle Islamophobia among their parents. He also said that all churches, mosques, synagogues and temples should be twinned with places of worship from other faiths and should work together to serve as community hubs for all residents rather than only as prayer spaces for their own congregations. This important figure in the U.K. raised the fact that many non-Muslims were afraid to enter a mosque. He said: "Occasionally you find that parents are saying, 'We're not sure we want our kids to go to the local



mosque'."<sup>150</sup>

In Brazil, around 2.5 million women joined a Facebook campaign to stop Bolsonaro in his tracks. Bolsonaro had mocked women as idiots and as tramps, as unworthy of rape, let alone equal pay, and he was then crowned president of a country that was home to 108 million of them. With Brazil's highly polarized 7 October election looming, huge numbers of Brazilian women were mobilizing to derail the presidential bid of the far-right frontrunner Jair Bolsonaro, who was leading polls with about 26% of intended votes. Ludimilla Teixeira, said she had founded the group – Mulheres Unidas Contra Bolsonaro or Women United Against Bolsonaro – on 30 August as a platform to coordinate protests against politicians with "misogynist, prejudiced and truly fascist" ideas. Within 24 hours it had accumulated 600,000 members. Motta and Teixeira said members hailed from all corners of the country and all walks of life: elderly women, lawyers, housewives, trans women, doctors, authors and civil servants. They were united by a collective dread that a man with such toxic views on women and minorities might become their leader. Teixeira said she was particularly worried about Bolsonaro's apparent desire to make abortion laws even more draconian, but warned the 'poison-





ous' views of a politician notorious for making racist and homophobic statements were not just a menace to women. She said: "We are his main target but we are not the only ones. Many other communities are having their rights threatened." Bolsonaro's unpopularity among female voters at the time presented a serious challenge to his presidential aspirations."<sup>151</sup>

In Germany, Chancellor Angela Merkel assured German parliament in September 2018 that she took seriously Germans' concerns about crimes committed by migrants and pledged a strong response, but condemned recent demonstrations as "hateful," saying there was "no excuse" for expressions of hate, Nazi sympathies or violence in response. The comments came after the killing of a German man for which an Iraqi and a Syrian had been arrested prompted days of anti-migrant protests in the eastern German city of Chemnitz that at times turned violent. Neo-Nazis were seen giving the stiff-armed Hitler salute in the largest demonstration, the day after the killing,

which attracted some 6,000 people, and on the sidelines of the protest masked men threw stones and bottles at a kosher restaurant yelling "Jewish pig, get out of Germany." The day before, in spontaneous protests by hundreds immediately after the killing, several foreigners were attacked and injured in the streets. Merkel assured lawmakers that her government was equally aware of its responsibility to take the wider concerns of the public seriously, and that it was working hard on the issue. She said: "There is no excuse or justification for hate, for the use of violence by some, Nazi symbols, hostility against people who look different, who own a Jewish restaurant, attacks on police – and heated debates about whether it's hate or a hunt don't help," Merkel said to applause.<sup>152</sup>

A little bit earlier, Angela Merkel also said in August 2018 after meeting her CDU party in Dresden: "The year 2015 should not be repeated and will not be repeated." In 2015 she spoke the famous words "Wir schaffen das" ('We can manage this') about migrants and



refugees coming to Germany in the hundred thousands for shelter and better opportunities. Anti-migrant AfD party and PEGIDA movement supporters demonstrated at her arrival in Dresden.<sup>153</sup>

On the same tone, German Interior Minister Horst Seehofer had called the far-right AfD party a “dangerous ... enemy of the state” in an interview with German press agency DPA, ahead of October 2018 local elections in his home region of Bavaria. “They just got cocky ... and dropped the mask,” he said. His CSU party was polling at 37.8 percent, the lowest this year, with the AfD in third place on 13.5 percent.<sup>154</sup>

Similar statement came from the Governor of Germany’s eastern state of Saxony who said far-right extremism was the biggest threat to democracy and there should be zero tolerance toward far-right crime. Michael Kretschmer told the regional parliament in September 2018 that authorities would appoint an official point-person for victims and looked into shortening legal proceedings against extremists. He spoke few days after the suspected killing of a German man by two refugees sparked anti-migrant protests in the eastern city of Chemnitz. Several people were injured in clashes between far-right protesters, police and counter-demonstrators in the beginning of September 2018. Kretschmer dismissed reports of groups of men attacking migrants in the city following the killing, saying: “There was no

mob, no hunting of people and no pogroms.” German Chancellor Angela Merkel and her spokesman had condemned videos appearing to show such attacks.<sup>155</sup>

In Belgium, hundreds of people protest against hatred and racism in Brussels, being organised by the CCIB (Collective against Islamophobia in Belgium). They marched under the slogan ‘Trop is te veel’. The President of the Collective, Mustapha Chairi said: “We have seen an explosion in the number of Islamophobic and racist attacks over the last few months. Our government is not doing anything about it. This is one action among many others we will be undertaking this week. It will also be our first action against hatred and racism in Brussels. We have organised meetings and conferences in five places in Brussels that should be playing a role in the fight





against racism.”<sup>156</sup>

Also in Belgium, the European Union authorities hit back at a threat by Italy’s populist government to stop budget payments to Brussels, amid a deepening row over refugees and migrants stuck on rescue ship. The Italian deputy prime minister has threatened to suspend his country’s financial contribution to the EU if Brussels did not intervene and redistribute the 150 refugees and migrants onboard a coastguard ship. Luigi Di Maio, the leader of the Five Star Movement (M5S) which governed in coalition with the far-right League, said that if the EU did not act immediately his party would not be willing to give €20bn each year to the bloc. The European commission said threats were unhelpful and called on all countries to find a solution to help the people onboard the *Ulbaldo Diciotti*, who had been denied permission to disembark from the Italian port of Catania by Matteo Salvini, Italy’s interior minister and League leader. Alexander Winterstein, the commission spokesman said: “Let’s not engage in finger pointing. Unconstructive comments, let alone threats are not helpful, and they will not get us any closer to a solution. The European Union is a community of rules and it operates on the basis of rules, not threats. So we would call on all parties involved to find a swift solution



for the persons on board in the spirit of good cooperation.”<sup>157</sup>

In Sweden, the Swedish Prime Minister denounced an increasingly popular far-right party as racist and a threat to the nation’s European values in September 2018 as political candidates made their final pre-election pitches to voters. The parliamentary election held in the month was the Sweden’s first since the government in 2015 allowed 163,000 migrants into the country of 10 million. During a heated debate Jimmie Akesson, the leader of the Sweden Democrats, caused a stir by blaming migrants for the difficulties they often have in finding employment. He said he heard it argued too many times that “if only migrants get a job, then everything will be all right. That’s not going to happen, that’s not how it is. We have to ask ourselves a question: why is it so difficult for these people to get a job? That is because they’re





not Swedish. They can't adjust to Sweden, and it's hard for them to get a job." Prime Minister Stefan Lofven stumped for his party, the Social Democrats, while portraying the Sweden Democrats as racist. Lofven accused some of his opponents of being prepared to work with the far-right party, which he vowed his party would not to. Lofven said: "We are not going to retreat one millimeter in the face of hatred and extremism wherever it shows itself. Again and again, they show their Nazi and racist roots and they are trying to destroy the EU at a time when we need that cooperation the most."<sup>158</sup>

In Canada, a couple rolled up their sleeves to do whatever they could for helpless Rohingya people in Myanmar. They try to raise awareness of the Rohingya issue with interviews they gave to news media. Fozia and Tahir Alvi were Muslims living in Canada who traveled all the way to Bangladesh to volunteer for Rohingya Muslims living in the refugee camp. The couple

spent two weeks among Rohingya Muslims. Being a family doctor, Fozia Alvi went to Bangladesh to tend to pregnant Rohingya women. She said that the conditions that they were living in were unbelievable. However, it was not the conditions of Rohingya refugees that shook Fozia to the core: It was the great number of Rohingya children. She described the difficulties Rohingya refugees face in camps: "About more than 50 percent of the refugees in Bangladesh camps are children under the age of 16. Some of them witnessed their parents' throats cut. Lots of teenagers were pregnant as they were raped in Myanmar before being able to flee. And now, they were struggling with how to take care of themselves and their babies." In addition, there were vital problems that Rohingya Muslims had to face in refugee camps. It was reported that due to malnutrition and lack of clean water, children and even adults in refugee camps had fallen ill, and it was feared that an epidemic might break out.<sup>159</sup>



### 3.5. Supports on Mosques

In the U.S., a South Texas mosque had been reopened due to the support from around the world and more than \$1 million in donations. Hundreds of people attended the gathering to celebrate the new beginning for the mosque that was destroyed by fire in January 2017. A federal jury in July 2018 convicted a man of arson, explosives and hate crimes in a case that

could lead to a 40-year prison term. Officials said more than 20,000 donors contributed about \$1.1 million through an online campaign to rebuild the mosque.<sup>160</sup>

Still in the U.S., while a group of Arlington police officers was inside the Dar El-Eman Islamic Center giving a presentation on law enforcement in November 2018, more officers were outside responding to a 911 caller who claimed to have a pipe bomb. The caller claimed to have a bomb and threatened to kill everyone inside the mosque. Patrol officers and fire investigators who deal with suspicious devices responded to the mosque, where dozens of congregants were gathered for a family-night event with Arlington police. A search of the area determined the threat was not cred-



ible, but police were working to track down who made the call. This was not the first time the Dar El-Eman mosque had been targeted. In 2011, Henry Clay Glaspell was sentenced to 14 months in prison after he pleaded guilty to burning down a playground at the mosque in July 2010. He confessed to targeting the mosque for days, throwing used cat litter at its door and

shouting ethnic slurs at worshippers.<sup>161</sup>

In Australia, an arson aimed at dividing the community had instead united it, with construction to repair the Toowoomba mosque under way. The mosque was left with significant structural damage after a fire tore through the building in 2016. Toowoomba mosque Imam, Abdul Kader said: "Everyone wants to see it up and running again. We have been receiving a lot of positive feedback about the project from people - everyone is excited to see it start after the three-year wait." Toowoomba Islamic Society president said public support underpinned the reparations, with people from across the country donating money to the project. The project was due to be completed in March 2019.<sup>162</sup>



### 3.6. Positive Development on Hijab

In Switzerland, a U.N. Human Rights Committee had declared that France's ban on full-face Islamic veils, such as the niqab and burqa, as a violation of Muslim women's rights. The committee, a body of 18 independent experts that monitors how nations implement an international civil rights treaty, said that France had failed to adequately explain why the 2010

law, which has come to be known as a burqa ban, was necessary. In particular, the Committee was not persuaded by France's claim that a ban on face covering was necessary and proportionate from a security standpoint or for attaining the goal of 'living together' in society. The committee said in a statement in October 2018: "States could require that individuals show their faces in specific circumstances for identification purposes, but considered that a general ban on the niqab was too sweeping for this purpose." The committee added that the ban confines women who wear full-face veils to their homes as "impeding their access to public services and marginalizing them."<sup>163</sup>

Meanwhile, the Swiss government outlines counterproposal to burqa ban. With the plans,



the government hoped to take the wind out of the sails of a popular initiative calling for a nationwide burqa ban. The initiative, which garnered more than the required 100,000 signatures to put it to a popular vote, called for it to be made illegal for anyone to cover their face in public, with some exceptions including for local customs, the weather, and health and safety

reasons. But the Swiss government had rejected the initiative, instead launching a counter-proposal, which was first mooted in late 2017 and was now up for consultation. In a statement on that consultation process published on Wednesday, the Federal Council said it was "aware that covering the face can be problematic," but the Council also said it wanted "targeted action instead of a general ban on face coverings". That targeted action included changes that would see people who force women to wear a Burqa or Niqab punished with a prison sentence of up to three years or by a monetary penalty. The Federal Council also said it wanted to establish clear rules on when people are required to show their face in dealings with authorities. It noted that while



the law already made express provision in law for the areas of security, migration and social security, the rules were not clear in other areas such as public transport. The Council also noted that, under the proposed rules, anyone who refused to show their face to authorities in situations where there was a legal obligation to do so would be fined. In its statement, the government criticized the popular initiative for a nationwide Burqa ban by saying it would see federal authorities overstepping their powers and entering into an area that was traditionally a matter for individual cantons. In 2013, the canton of Ticino introduced a ban on Burqas while other cantons rejected such a move. The Federal Council also said that the popular initiative on a nationwide burqa ban could be counter-productive because women could be driven to stay at home, thus becoming more socially isolated. Switzerland was a liberal society and the introduction of such a ban went against that, the Council added.<sup>164</sup>

In Denmark, thousands of people marched against a controversial ban in Denmark on the wearing of face veils in public that came into force in August 2018. Demonstrations were held in the capital city of Copenhagen and the second largest city of Aarhus against the ban, which was approved in May 2018. The protests organized by Kvinder I Dialog, a group founded by left-wing activists, supported by Muslim migrants and citizens of Denmark. Demonstrators, who gathered in the Norrebro district of the capital city, covered their faces with veils and masks in support of women being targeted by the ban. The crowd marched towards the Bellahøj police station calling the police to focus on more important problems rather than

fining people who wear veils. Sabina Youssef, one of the demonstrators, told media that she would continue to wear her veil despite the ban. Violators to be punished with a fine of up to 1,000 kroner (\$156). Repeat offenders could be fined up to 10,000 kroner (\$1,563). The law was approved in the Danish parliament in a 75-30 vote with 74 absentees. Rachid Nekkaz, a French business executive of Algerian origin, had launched a fund against the burqa ban, which he called "illegal", and has paid over 500 fines of women who defied similar bans in six countries. It was estimated that Muslims account for about 7 percent of Denmark's population of 5.6 million.<sup>165</sup>

Not only on streets, protest in Denmark was also done through fashion. Models at Copenhagen Fashion Week donned burqas, hijabs and niqabs while walking the runway to protest Denmark's new ban on Islamic face coverings. Designer Reza Etamadi said: "The ban violates the free choice we in the Western world are known for and proud to have. I have a duty to support all women's freedom of speech and freedom of thought." Reza Etamadi incorporated the coverings into the show for his brand MUF10 in September 2018.<sup>166</sup>





### 3.7. On Inter-Faiths



In the U.S., Robert Bowers, a Far-Right supporter, stormed the 'Tree of Life' synagogue in Pittsburgh on 27 October 2018, shouting anti-Semitic slurs and opening fire on the worshippers, killing 11 of them in a furious, hate-filled, 20-minute-attack. The murders were made worse because they happened in a house of worship, a place where believers sought peace and comfort. When Americans were reeling in the aftermath of this horrific massacre, Muslims stepped up to ease the suffering of their Jewish brothers and sisters, raising hundreds of thousands of dollars to rebuild the synagogue, pay for the funerals of the slain and the medical bills of the wounded survivors. Recently, Muslim-Jewish cohesion in America had become fraught with complexities. Despite these obstacles, the communities have persisted in

finding common ground and supporting each other. In addition to the Muslim community's financial and emotional support for the victims of the synagogue shooting, the Muslim community had also raised large sums to help several Jewish cemeteries rebuild after vandals attacked them.<sup>167</sup>

In different place in the U.S., the Central Maine Muslims held a march as part of the event to show support for their Jewish neighbors in the wake of the synagogue shooting in Pittsburgh. A participant said the Pittsburgh incident was tragic and a loss of life for no reason hence people of different religions should be together. Rabbi Erica Asch, leader of Temple Beth El said the show of support, not just by Muslims at the event but also by other religious leaders in the area who've expressed support



for the Jewish community since shooting incident at Pittsburgh synagogue in October. The Rev. Carie Johnsen, leader of Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Augusta was in there too.<sup>168</sup>

Meanwhile, Muslims had also raised more than \$146,000 through a Detroit-based fundraising site to help the victims of the Pittsburgh synagogue attack. Muslims mobilized on LaunchGood, an online site headquartered in Detroit created and led by Muslims since 2013. The site was similar to platforms like GoFundMe. The effort focused on raising money to help support shooting victims with short-term needs such as funeral expenses and medical bills, according to LaunchGood, and the money was being distributed to the synagogue through the Islamic Center of Pittsburgh. LaunchGood said the campaign for the synagogue victims was started by two Muslim groups, Celebrate Mercy, which honored Islam's prophet, and MPower Change, a non-profit group that mobilized Muslims on social justice issues.<sup>169</sup>

Similar but in the U.K., a former Knoxville resident's Muslim raised nearly \$240,000 in days for Jewish victims of the Pittsburgh synagogue shooting. CelebrateMercy, founded by University of Tennessee graduate Tarek El-Messidi in 2013. CelebrateMercy launched its fundraising effort, aimed to provide financial help to victims' families for funeral expenses, medical bills or other needs. Its message resounded. "Muslims Unite for Pittsburgh Synagogue" met its initial \$25,000 goal in six hours. The last goal

of \$150,000 was reached in 50 hours. The campaign's ended; \$150,000 had been given to the families. A total of 5,820 donors gave \$238,634 — nine times the original \$25,000 goal. The money left went to impact long-term Jewish-Muslim relations and foster Muslim-Jewish collaboration, dialogue and solidarity.<sup>170</sup>

In Germany, around 25 Jews and Muslims rode tandem bicycles through the German capital in June in a protest against growing anti-Semitism and attacks on Muslims in the country. Some were rabbis and imams, others included women in headscarves and Jewish community members donning skullcaps from Berlin and beyond who shared the bikes on a tour through the city.

Rabbi Elias Dray, one of the organizers of the ride that started at Berlin's Holocaust memorial, said the interfaith tour was intended to boost contacts between Jews and Muslims and other Germans. He rode a tandem together with Berlin Imam Ender Cetin.

They and others wore white vests with the words: "Jews and Muslims for respect and tolerance." In addition to the 25 interfaith-bikers, dozens of people joined the bicycle tour through Berlin's downtown in a show of solidarity. Anti-Semitism had been on the rise in Germany and while attacks on Muslims had increased. The rising tensions came as Germany grappled with an influx of more than 1 million mostly Muslim migrants, along with the rise of a nationalist party, the Alternative for Germany, which was elected to Parliament in 2017 for the first time.



Its leaders were known for their openly anti-Muslim stance, while anti-Semitism has also featured in their statements, but less often.<sup>171</sup>

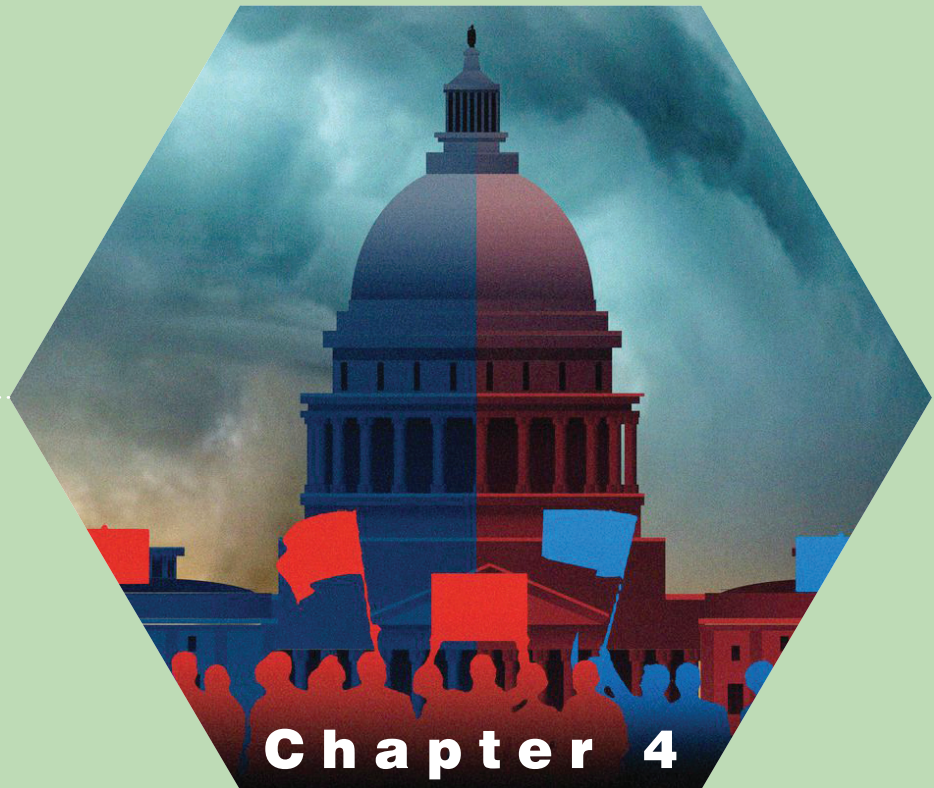
Also in Germany, people of various faiths visited mosques across Germany in October at an annual event to encourage dialogue and help overcome misunderstandings about Islam. Burhan Kesici, spokesman for Germany's Muslim Coordination Council (KRM), said in a statement: "This day gives an opportunity for more than 100,000 visitors to learn more about Islam and get into conversation with Muslims." Nearly 900 mosques across Germany took part in the annual "Open Mosque Day" event.<sup>172</sup>

In Canada, Mosques in Halifax, Sussex and Moncton, N.B., Sherbrooke, Que., Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Edmonton and Calgary opened their doors in November 2018 for the second annual Visit My Mosque Day. The event aimed to dispel misconceptions, foster an appreciation of the Muslim faith in Canada, and celebrate the philanthropy of the Canadian-Muslim community throughout the year. The day was organized by the Canadian-Muslim Vote, a non-partisan organization that encour-

ages Muslims to be politically engaged. Shafiq Ebrahim, vice-president of Jaffari Islamic Centre in Thornhill, told media: "We have nothing to hide. We aren't a secret society or mysterious in any way. We're law-abiding people who pay taxes and love our neighbourhood and want to build genuine relationships here." The centre offered tours of worship halls, gave lectures on education and outreach activities and had scholars on standby to answer any theological queries. Stations for women to have their hands painted with traditional henna and learn how to tie a hijab were also available for anyone interested.<sup>173</sup>







# **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**



**Observing events, media news, discourses, public feelings, and incidents on Islamophobia occurring during the latest 10-months period, the Islamophobia Observatory draws conclusion, as pointed below:**

- There was an increasing level of Islamophobia under the covered period, indicated by the growing fear against Islam and Muslims in certain parts of the world which led to negative perceptions among non-Muslims. Within such circumstances, Islam was seen as an 'enemy'; a religion of intrinsic violence whose disciples had a tendency to spread harms to the followers of other religions. Islam has been portrayed as a 'threat' to western values and civilizations, an 'alien' religion prone to bloodshed, a stigma that trigger intolerant attitudes amongst non-Muslims vis-à-vis their otherwise. These negative stereotyping eventually ended up into negative sentiments, dread or hatred of Islam that includes multi-form discrimination against Muslims, manifested into the exclusion of Muslims around the world from economic, social, and public life.
- Muslims in the U.S. continue to suffer from various forms of Islamophobic and anti-Muslims incidents as hate crimes. Political campaigns were emboldened by President Trump's ascent to the White House, while the

2018-midterm elections have seen a dramatic rise in anti-Muslim rhetoric. There were anti-Muslim campaigns and manipulation of anti-Muslim sentiments ahead of the midterm vote, where a significant number of candidates were using terrorism threats or Islamophobic rhetoric to smear their political opponents.

- The power of the far right circle within the White House has been drastically reduced, and the 'Breitbart faction' has become marginalized, particularly following the resignation of Jeff Sessions who was a threat against the rights of minorities, which further weakened the far right group within the administration. However, Stephen Miller, far-right political activist who serves as a senior advisor for policy for President Donald Trump, remains as influential figure and a powerful player on immigration.
- The ruling of the European Court of Human Rights on the case on defamation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) has served as strike-balance between freedom of expression and respect for Religious Beliefs. The ECHR upheld a decision of Austrian Court, concluding that defamation of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) constituted incitement to hatred and therefore, "goes beyond the permissible limits of an objective debate" and therefore, convicting someone for disparaging religious



doctrines was not a violation of the European Human Rights Convention on freedom of expression.

- There has been a growing resistance to the Far-rights movement along with a widespread awareness among the public Americans that the 'Alt-right' was nothing more than an 'euphemism' for the white nationalism—a movement whose only 'political' agenda is spreading hate, fake news, bigotry, racism, sexism, xenophobia, misogyny and intolerance. The Alt-right in the US today was even considered as an umbrella term that encompasses Neo-Nazis, the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Nation, and other hate groups who overtly and proudly seek war among races.

- Today's political landscape is increasingly characterized by assertions of identity and group belongingness, being linked to the recent widespread of populist revolt against globalization and its disruptive cultural dimension. Particular in Europe, the growth of populist movements was not only grounded in the discontent with Globalization's unequal economic consequences, but also on the threats to traditional national identities arising from high levels of migration; which have given birth to anti-immigrant populism and the emergence of white nationalism.

- At the time when elections took place in Europe's main political and economic powers i.e. Austria, Netherlands, France, and Germany, Populism has become increasingly prevalent, encouraging more and more Europeans to seek a solution from conservative options. Constituents were turning to conservative ideals in contrast to the formerly preferred liberalism, which was believed to have been provoked by issues i.e. migration crisis, Euro-scepticism, terrorist attacks, economic dissatisfaction, and unemployment. Across Europe, right-wing parties became electorally successful, albeit sparing France and Netherlands.

- Anti-Islam sentiments had bolstered almost everywhere across Europe along with debates about hot issues such as immigrants, non-European foreigners, assimilation and integration, national identity etc., which was worsened by the surge of refugees fleeing the civil war in some Muslim countries, as well as 'periodic' terrorist attacks hitting the continent. These ingredients has been creating environment for right-wing parties and figures to prosper, in parallel with the European Union's policies of integration of which been blamed for the situation.

- Hijab legal standing in many countries continued to suffer further blow. Following de-



cision of the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) that banning the particular dresses is “necessary in a democratic society,” a number of countries had outlawed veil, headscarf, hijab, niqab, and burqa i.e. France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Denmark, Bulgaria, Latvia, Estonia, Albania, Austria, and Norway. Some other countries might soon add itself into the list such as Australia, Poland, Algeria, Egypt, and the United Kingdom.

- Condemnation by international community, and statements by religious leaders in support to Rohingya people in Myanmar had been proven effective for addressing Islamophobia as well as other crucial issues in the country, including to push the de facto leader of Myanmar, Aung San Suu Kyi, to take an urgent action to help the persecuting Rohingya.

- Apart from that in Myanmar, under the reviewed period, the rising trend of Islamophobia was of particular concerns in China, Australia, and India.

- British Prime Minister Theresa May, France President Emanuel Macron, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Netherlands Prime Minister Mark Rutte, and Swedish Prime Minister Stefan Lofven were among World Leaders

showing ‘friendly’ gestures towards Islam and Muslims.

- Figures deserve close attention: Matteo Salvini (Italy), Victor Orban (Hungary), Jair Bolsonaro (Brazil), Steve Bannon (U.S.), Stephen Miller (U.S), Geert Wilders (Netherlands), Sebastian Kurz (Austria), Heinz-Christian Strache (Austria), Tommy Robinson (U.K.), Nigel Farage (U.K), Fraser Anning (Australia), Cory Bernardi (Australia).

**Islamophobia is a complex issue, and there were major obstacles that may impede from having an effective strategy to combat the phenomena. Therefore, a series of practical recommendations is offered, in hoping they might help Member States and other stakeholders inform their policies or take necessary measures:**

- Emphasize fundamental human rights and freedoms in combating Islamophobia.

- Use existing U.N. treaties on religious freedoms, freedom of expression, prohibition of racial discrimination, etc. as tools to combat Islamophobia.

- Ensure progress on the existing international consensus in the form of the Action Plan of U.N. Human Rights Council Resolution 16/18.



- Encourage governments to revive the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations initiative, giving special attention to the Muslim-Western divide fueling Islamophobia.

- Adopt integrated rather than geographical approaches in countering Islamophobia.

- Establish strong links among groups who fight religion-based discrimination, including Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and Christian-phobia, while creating alliances with other groups that have been marginalized and dehumanized on the basis of racism and xenophobia.

- Create centers for the study of Islam in Western societies—similar to the few that already exist at Georgetown and Harvard universities.

- In Muslim societies and countries, internally address issues and factors that contribute to negative images of Islam and Muslims, and emphasize the importance of proper Islamic education for young children to avoid ignorance of religion among the new generation.

- Create initiatives toward developing a healthy national/religious identity to increase young Muslims' contribution to the wider community without denying their religion.

- Engage with civil society and young

people in implementing government programs and actions to address religion and discrimination.

- Engage in a constructive and meaningful dialogue (interreligious, intercultural, and inter-civilizational) toward cohesive and harmonious societies.

- Create more space to facilitate social interaction between Muslims and non-Muslims.

- Work toward changing the hearts and minds of non-Muslim Westerners to believe that immigrants are not necessarily a threat to their values and principles.

- In Muslim countries and communities, work more for displaying to the world what Muslims are, rather than simply denying what the extremists have been saying or doing.

- Challenge the ongoing myth of “Islamization” of the West as nurtured by xenophobic, populist parties who have been on the rise across Europe and elsewhere.

- Encourage legal and civic advocacy to oppose normalization of Islamophobia in mainstream political and media discourses, particularly in Europe and the U.S.

- Work to counter media reports that propagate stereotypes and stigmatize Muslim populations.



- Campaign towards raising awareness on the danger of Islamophobia as well as towards promoting the positive images of Islam.
- Give attention to the problems of the European Muslims, i.e. by taking the necessary action to operationalize the Contact Group on Muslim Minorities in Europe.
- Initiate global Muslim diaspora projects while collecting information about Muslim communities in the West.
- Increase the role of religious and community leaders to curb tendencies of extremism by promoting the ideals of tolerance, moderation, mutual respect and peaceful co-existence.
- To encourage inter-faith and inter-religion dialogues within the OIC Member States to raise awareness about religious interpretations and beliefs, and open space for further discussion about Islam and faith.
- Collaborate with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) who have been working actively at community and grassroots levels.
- Establish Islamophobia Centers in Member Countries while to strengthen the already-existing centers in some Member States, as well as in the OIC General Secretariat.
- Provide supports to the Islamophobia Observatory by allocating necessary resources to allow the Observatory establishing network with other hate speech monitoring and reporting mechanisms around the world.
- Create partnerships with non-Muslim institutions and individuals to implement concrete actions i.e. policies, development, relief, etc.
- Appoint a special envoy to conduct OIC's engagement with international and regional organizations and civil societies.
- Disseminate the Islamophobia Report among Muslim population, diaspora, Member states as well as Non-Member States, widely.
- Maximize the roles of OIC Offices abroad by giving them assignment to deal with Islamophobia-related issues as well as by giving them more space to informally working with local Muslim communities to address the issue Islamophobia at community level.
- Provide more support, politically and financially, to initiatives and projects to address the issue of Islamophobia by relevant OIC Institutions.
- Keep the issue of Islamophobia as an international concern and thus remains on the agenda of UN's Human Rights Council and General Assembly.



## ANNEX Islamophobic Incidents



## • Incidents Related to Mosques:

### **Canada: Alberta mosque set ablaze in 'brazen' arson—**

A mosque in Edson, Alta., was set on fire in June 2018 shortly after a small group of people left the building following evening prayers. Mosque security camera footage captured the flames as well as a person in a dark hoodie leaving the property with what appears to be a red jerrycan. The fire occurred a day after Eid al-Fitr, the Muslim celebration that marks the end of Ramadan, a holy month of fasting. It left soot and scorch marks on the exterior of the building. The National Council of Canadian Muslims called it a cowardly act of arson against a mosque.



See: CBC News' entry, in: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/edmonton-mosque-fire-aid-islamic-society-alberta-1.4710155>, retrieved on 19.6.2018

### **U.K.: Armed police called after catapult attacks on two Birmingham mosques during evening prayers—**

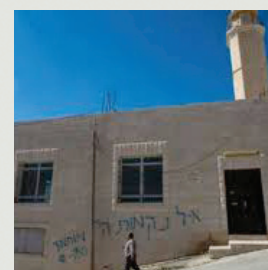


Armed police had been called to two mosques in Birmingham after windows were smashed during evening prayers. There were initial fears someone could have shot at the Masjid Qamarul Islam mosque and Al-Hijrah mosque, which were targeted minutes apart in Small Heath. Police said windows were smashed in September 2018, amid counterterror investigations into the alleged Westminster attacker Salih Khater elsewhere in Birmingham. The reason for the attacks was not yet clear, but officers were continuing to patrol the area to reassure worshippers and local residents.

See: Independent News' entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/birmingham-mosque-attacks-catapult-prayers-islamophobia-westminster-terror-a8494321.html>, retrieved on 17.8.2018

### **U.K.: Man wrote offensive graffiti inside mosque in Balsall Heath—**

Culm Mannion, the man who wrote offensive graffiti inside Clifton Mosque in Balsall Heath in November 2017 had been sentenced. Mannion went into the mosque and wrote offensive statements in the prayer room. He returned three days later, where he damaged Turbah Stones in the wash room. After an attack at the Guru Nanak Temple on 29 November, Mannion returned to Clifton Mosque the same day where he daubed the word 'kuffar' or non-believer on the walls. Mannion who had previously pleaded guilty to four counts of racially/religiously aggravated criminal damage was handed a community order for 18 months with 20 rehabilitation activity requirement days by magistrates. He was also ordered to pay £270 in costs.



See: Birmingham Mail News' entry, in: <https://www.birminghammail.co.uk/news/midlands-news/man-wrote-offensive-graffiti-inside-15052440>, retrieved on 21.8.2018



### ***U.K.: Police investigate video allegedly showing young women leaving bacon outside mosque—***

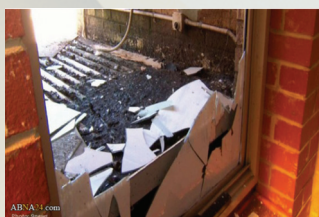
Police were investigating after video footage emerged of two women allegedly putting bacon on a mosque in Oldham. The footage showed the women laughing as they appeared to leave bacon at a back door of Madina Mosque on Stansfield Street during prayers. One of the offenders said: “you get arrested if you put bacon on the door” as they approached their target. The other offender then joked “we are going to get f\*\*\*\*\*g arrested”. The pair WERE confronted by a member of the mosque and one of the offenders WAS heard apologising, before they run round to the other side. One of the women dangled what was believed to be bacon in front of the camera, before leaving it at the back door and running away.



See: [Newsletter.co.uk News' entry, in: http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/muslims-targeted-in-pig-s-head-incident-1-8119740](http://www.newsletter.co.uk/news/muslims-targeted-in-pig-s-head-incident-1-8119740), retrieved on 25.8.2017

### ***Australia: Australia mosque badly damaged in arson attack—***

A mosque in Perth's north had been fire-bombed overnight as the Islamic community marked a religious holiday. Emergency crews were called to the Mirrabooka mosque to find chairs and a tree on fire. The blaze was quickly contained, but smoke and water badly damaged the second storey of the building. The firebug struck while the Islamic community celebrated Eid al-Adha, the Festival of Sacrifice, but it remained unclear as to why the mosque was targeted. Mosque leader Ameer Ali told media that he had never had any trouble in three decades, and the community response was always positive. He said: “We run this place by weekly collections... the community is very helpful and that's why we've been running for 30 years. Every Friday, something like 2000 people come to pray at this place. There have been no incidents so far, nothing happened.”



See: [ABNA24 News' entry, in: http://en.abna24.com/news/oceania/australia-mosque-badly-damaged-in-arson-attack-pics\\_907085.html](http://en.abna24.com/news/oceania/australia-mosque-badly-damaged-in-arson-attack-pics_907085.html), retrieved on 28.8.2018

### ***U.S.: Austin mosque heightening security after vandalism—***

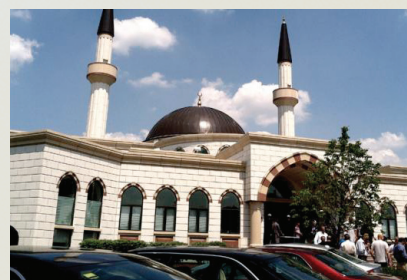
The local Muslim community was reeling after vandals caused thousands of dollars in damages to their mosque. Some members of the North Austin Muslim Community Center were in shock, but they were finding ways to make it work for them. Mosque's vice president Adnan Suleiman said: “It's a sense of breaking the peace that you have in your heart. You're coming into a place where you want to find peace, but then you see this in front of you, and that feelings of finding peace was shattered for a moment or so.” The Austin Police Department said officers responded to a call at the North Austin Muslim Community Center, as someone shattered the glass doors and windows of the main hall. A car's tires were also slashed. The organization had been in Austin for 25 years and Suleiman said this was the first time property was damaged. There was now going to be armed security overnight and planned for high resolution surveillance cameras and more lighting. Besides vigilance, members were being asked to look for opportunities to build relationships with the community.

See: [Spectrum Austin News' entry, in: https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2018/09/03/austin-mosque-heightening-security-after-vandalism](https://spectrumlocalnews.com/tx/austin/news/2018/09/03/austin-mosque-heightening-security-after-vandalism), retrieved on 4.9.2018



***U.S.: Vandal targets north Austin mosque for third time in recent weeks—***

A north Austin mosque was once again repairing costly damage caused by vandalism. Early Wednesday morning Imam Islam Mossaad said someone slashed the tires on two vans parked outside the North Austin Muslim Community Center. This was the third destructive act of vandalism targeting the mosque in within few weeks, and the same person could be behind it. In September there was report saying that someone got onto the grounds and used rocks to break out six large glass panes around the buildings. Few days before, car tires were slashed at the facility. After the two initial incidents, the mosque created an online fundraiser to help pay for repairs, collected more than \$9,000 in donations.



See: Kxan News' entry, in: <https://www.kxan.com/news/local/austin/vandal-targets-north-austin-mosque-for-third-time-in-recent-weeks/1445378836>, retrieved on 15.9.2018

***U.K.: Car hits Muslims leaving London Mosque in 'Islamophobic Attack'—***

A car drove into a crowd of Muslims leaving a mosque in London, England, while the vehicle's occupants allegedly made Islamophobic comments. The incident left several people injured. According to the Metropolitan Police, three men and a woman, all in their twenties, were sitting in the vehicle in the mosque's private car park behaving anti-socially before security told them to leave. After driving near to the Islamic center, the car's occupants were involved in a confrontation with a large group of people visiting the mosque in Cricklewood, north London. The police release said: "Words were exchanged and comments of an Islamophobic nature were allegedly made by the group in the car." The car and its occupants failed to stop and injured three people. Two men in their twenties suffered minor injuries and were taken to hospital. A third man in his fifties was hospitalized with a serious leg injury and remains under the medical care.

See: Newsweek News' entry, in: <https://www.newsweek.com/muslims-attack-mosque-london-car-islam-1127415>, retrieved on 20.9.2018

***UK: 'Anti-Islamic' terror suspect 'plotted to blow up mosque to avenge death of Manchester Arena child'—***

An 'anti-Islamic' terrorist suspect was planning to blow up a mosque in response to the killing of an eight-year-old girl who died in the Manchester bombing in 2017, a court was heard. Steven Bishop from south London was accused of tampering with fireworks with the intention of setting them off with a detonator he purchased from the dark web, a collection of websites operating on an encrypted network. Bishop appeared at Westminster Magistrates' Court in November 2018.



See: RT News' entry, in: <https://www.rt.com/uk/443434-terrorist-mosque-attack-manchester/>, retrieved on 9.11.2018



**Canada: Arson at Peterborough Masjid Al-Salaam mosque remains unsolved—**

Peterborough police were still looking for the person or persons responsible for setting the Masjid Al-Salaam mosque ablaze back in 2015, when the Ontario Fire Marshall Office was called in to investigate, and the fire was quickly considered suspicious. At a press conference the following day, police said a window was broken at the mosque and an accelerator was placed inside. Police had footage from a surveillance camera inside the mosque but weren't able to provide any details about who was caught on tape. November 14 marked the third anniversary of the fire, which was deemed a hate crime by Peterborough police. While saying that arson at Peterborough mosque was a hate crime, the Police Department said in a statement: "At this time there is no new information to provide on the investigation, but we are still asking anyone with information to come forward and we will continue to investigate a new leads." Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says Peterborough responded to mosque fire with hope, love and compassion.

See: My Kawartha News' entry, in: <https://www.mykawartha.com/news-story/9030669-arson-at-peterborough-masjid-al-salaam-mosque-remains-unsolved/>, retrieved on 14.11.2018

**UK: British Woman attack mosque with booze and bacon in Oldham, England—**

Shocking video had been circulated on social media shows two British women videotaping themselves while pouring alcohol and throwing bacon in front of a mosque in Oldham, England. The video started with the two women approaching the mosque during prayer time, which could be heard in the video. One of them was heard warning her friend that they could get arrested for what they were doing while laughing. The video also showed one of them while leaving bacon at the door, before they started laughing hysterically and ran away. The two women who were widely-condemned, were believed to carry out such an act as a hate-crime towards Muslims, considering bacon and alcohol were prohibited in Islam. The incident had been investigated by police, according to authorities.

See: Albawaba News' entry, in: <https://www.albawaba.com/loop/british-woman-attack-mosque-booze-and-bacon-oldham-england-1210904>, retrieved on 9.11.2018

**Germany: Mosque in Duisburg vandalized with racist slurs—**

An under-construction mosque in western Germany's Duisburg city was attacked by unidentified assailants who defaced the building with racist slogans. The attackers painted a Star of David on the wall of Mevlana mosque, affiliated with the Turkish-Islamic Community National View (IGMG). The police launched an investigation into the case of vandalism. Germany, a country of over 81 million people, has the second-largest Muslim population in Western Europe after France. Among the country's nearly 4.7 million Muslims, 3 million were of Turkish origin. In recent years, the country had seen growing Islamophobia and hatred of migrants triggered by propaganda from far-right and populist parties.



See: The Muslim News' entry, in: <http://muslimnews.co.uk/news/islamophobia/germany-mosque-duisburg-vandalised-racist-slurs/>, retrieved on 15.1.2019



## II. Political and Social Campaigns against Islam and Muslims

### ***Austria: Turkey labels Austria as ‘racist’ for closing 7 mosques and seeking to expel at least 60 imams—***

While Muslims around the world were observing the holy month of Ramadan and gearing up to celebrate Eid, Austria had made headlines for its move to shut down seven mosques. Additionally, the nation was also seeking to expel dozens of imams in what it said was “just the beginning” of its crackdown against radical Islam. Austria was home to about 600,000 Muslims and most of them were known to be of Turkish descent. After the European nation announced its decision, Ibrahim Kalin, the spokesman of President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, lashed out at Austria and said its policy was “Islamophobic, racist and discriminatory.” Kalin wrote on Twitter: “Austria’s decision to close seven mosques and expel imams is a reflection of the Islamophobic, racist and discriminatory wave in this country. It is an attempt to target Muslim communities for the sake of scoring cheap political points.” Explaining Austria’s



decision, Chancellor Sebastian Kurz said that Austria was very clear about its policies and that there was no place for “parallel societies and radicalizing tendencies” in the country. Six of the seven mosques that had been ordered to shut down were operated by Arab Cultural and Religious Community and most of them were said to be in Vienna. The Austrian government was known to have been cracking down on many Muslim organizations, which it believed violating the laws of the country.

See: International Business Times News’ entry, in: <https://www.ibtimes.co.in/turkey-labels-austria-racist-closing-7-mosques-seeking-expel-least-60-imams-771496>, retrieved on 10.6.2018

### ***U.S.: Parents Sue California Schools Over ‘Anti-Islamophobia’ Program—***

Parents and local organizations were suing the San Diego Unified School District over a controversial classroom program focused on the Islamic faith and protecting Muslim students from bullying. The lawsuit was challenging the constitutionality of the school district’s ‘anti-Islamophobia’ program, which was created in a partnership with the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR). School district officials claimed the program was meant to ensure that Islam was portrayed in a more inclusive light in classrooms, however local parents argued CAIR was using the program to promote their religion in public schools. The lawsuit also pushed back against the district’s claims that the program was needed protect Muslim students from bullying incidents. The concerned parents were demanding that an injunction be issued, halting the program and forcing the schools to stop working with CAIR.

See: CBS Boston News’ entry, in: <https://boston.cbslocal.com/2018/07/19/lawsuit-schools-anti-islamophobia/>, retrieved on 20.7.2018



### **U.K.: Third of British people believe there are Muslim 'no-go areas' in UK governed by Sharia law—**

Every time a major terrorist attack happened in Europe, there had been a corresponding spike in the numbers of anti-Muslim hate incidents taking place. For instance in the U.K. such a negative trends was evident at times following the murder of Lee Rigby in 2013, and also after the murder of young children in the Manchester Arena attack in 2017. The two terrorist attacks and corresponding spikes in hate crimes had always been conjoined hence there were measures could be taken by local authorities, police forces and civil society groups to alter messaging online and in the media, ensuring communities were brought together around shared values and no one group isolated. After the Westminster attack, examples of this work included faith communities doing interviews with the press, Muslim women being shown demonstrating against extremism, social media pictures of people of faith standing together on Westminster bridge, and article placements from members of the Muslim community stating that an attack on communities was an attack on Islam. All of these efforts amplified while the voices heard through mainstream press, social media and picture opportunities. There was also a need for early intervention and involvement of Muslims, with the help of statutory authorities and other communities, which could dampen down feelings of rage and anger. This would delineate them from any stereotypical associations that could be made by people looking for someone to blame who 'looked like' the perpetrator. These closed down and drowned out hate messages and the narratives of extremist groups seeking to create divides. The hateful narrative being promoted was that Muslims were somehow 'barbaric', 'not to be trusted' and 'deceitful' in their lust to harm innocent civilians.



See: Metro News' entry, in: <https://metro.co.uk/2018/12/11/anti-muslim-hate-crime-increases-after-terror-attacks-heres-how-we-stop-it-8224523/>, retrieved on 12.12.2018

### **Austria: Austrian ban on Muslim, Turkish symbols denounced—**

A move by Austria to include Muslim and Turkish symbols as banned signs of extremism had drawn the ire of communities who denounced it as a politically-motivated move amid the rise of the far-right in Europe. Austrian parliament approved the amendment in December 2018 for the ban of what the law called extremist symbols, including a gesture of the 'grey wolf', a symbol of the Turkish opposition Nationalist Movement Party and the 'rabaa', a hand gesture commonly used by the Turkish government and Muslims to symbolize unity. The ban, which would come into force in March 2019, was to bring fines up to 10,000 euros for the use, distribution of badges and other material containing the symbols. The Turkish Foreign Ministry denounced the ban in a statement said: "It is worrying and concerning that a legal action with an ambitious goal like cooperation in counterterrorism was deviated from its course by a political and populist move. It is clear that the law does not comply with democratic values and it does target political establishment and democracy as a whole, not only those who use the symbols."



See: Daily Sabah News' entry, in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/turkey/2018/12/15/austrian-ban-on-muslim-turkish-symbols-denounced>, retrieved on 16.12.2018



### III. Intolerance against Islam and its Sacred Symbols

#### **Netherlands: Dutch anti-Islam politician to hold Prophet Muhammad cartoon competition—**

Dutch anti-Islam politician Geert Wilders was to hold a Prophet Muhammad cartoon competition at his party's parliamentary offices. The party was offering a €5,000 prize for the winner. The Freedom Party, which has previously called for the Quran to be banned, said the contest had been approved by the country's counter-terrorism agency. Drawings would be judged by American cartoonist Bosch Fawstin, winner of a similar competition in Texas three years before. The far-right MP claimed Islam was a totalitarian political ideology rather than a religion. He has previously called for mosques and Islamic schools to be shut down and for a blanket ban on Muslim immigrants. In 2016 he was convicted of inciting hatred and discrimination



after asking supporters whether they wanted "fewer or more Moroccans" in their country. "Muslims can be offended to death. That's not the problem." In support to Wilders, Fawstin, who was publishing a book of cartoons of the prophet, tweeted "Muslims murdering over cartoons is the problem. And that has to be defied by drawing Mohammad."

See: Independent News' entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/geert-wilders-prophet-muhammad-cartoon-competition-islamophobia-dutch-netherlands-a8396386.html>, retrieved on 14.6.2018

Later on, Geert Wilders said he had no more plans to revive the blasphemous caricatures contest after it emerged as a motive for a stabbing in Amsterdam in September 2018. Wilders, speaking on the sidelines of Ambrosetti conference in Italy, expressed shock over the attack, in which a man stabbed and injured two American tourists at Amsterdam's central station. Dutch media identified the assailant as a 19-year-old Afghan. The attack came after Wilders cancelled plans to hold the controversial cartoon competition, which had also drawn a complaint by many, who warned blasphemous caricatures could incite hate and intolerance.



See: The Tribune News' entry, in: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1798882/3-anti-islam-dutch-lawmaker-says-no-blasphemous-caricatures-now/>, retrieved on 10.9.2018



## IV. Discrimination against Muslim Individuals and Communities

### ***U.K.: Council ban on unstunned halal meat for schools branded 'Islamophobic'—***

Lancashire council had voted to stop supplying schools with halal meat from animals killed without being stunned. It was believed to be the first local authority in the UK to rule that meat supplied to pupils in its schools must be from animals that have been stunned before slaughter. The Lancashire Council of Mosques strongly objected when the council proposed the step in 2016. Under UK law, farm animals must be stunned before slaughter - although there are religious exemption for Jews and Muslims. But councillors in Lancashire argued that slaughtering animals without stunning them beforehand caused "unnecessary stress and suffering" to cattle, sheep and goats. The council held a public consultation in which two-thirds of 8,500 respondents (65 per cent) strongly disagreed with the proposal and a third (33 per cent) strongly agreed. However in July 2018, councillors decided to press ahead with avoiding unstunned meat when the contract with its halal supplier is renewed.



See: Independent News' entry, in: <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/no-stun-halal-meat-ban-lancashire-schools-pupils-muslim-islamophobic-a8445896.html>, retrieved on 14.7.2018

### ***Austria: Austrian state wants to force Jews and Muslims who eat kosher and halal meat to register with government—***

Alexander Murlasits, spokesman of Austria's Freedom Party (FPÖ) told Media in July 2018 that Jews and Muslims would still be allowed to purchase kosher and halal food, but only if they could prove that they lived in Lower Austria and were observant. Jewish and Muslim advocates said that while both meats were produced without pre-stunning, kosher and



halal techniques were in fact meant to reduce the suffering of animals. Critics have doubted that halal and kosher slaughter is indeed less painful than the more widely used procedures. In a letter sent to a Jewish community organization in Austria, Lower Austria FPÖ cabinet minister Gottfried Waldhäusl indicated that he shared the animal rights concerns but would not seek a general ban on kosher and halal meat.

See: National Post News' entry, in: <https://nationalpost.com/news/world/austrian-state-wants-to-force-jews-and-muslims-who-eat-kosher-and-halal-meat-to-register-with-government>, retrieved on 20.7.2018



### **U.K.: Muslim woman told to 'f\*\*\* off' after Boris Johnson's burqa comments—**

**M**unavara Ghauri was walking towards 'The Close' to show her relatives the cathedral at twilight when she said she was "dismayed to hear a man in passing car in Harnham telling us to f\*\*\* off". She said: "Then it struck me, .....My aunt from the US and my sister-in-law from London were both in black and were wearing black Niqabs." It came after the former Foreign Secretary said Muslim women wearing face veils looked like bank robbers or letter boxes.



See: Salisbury Journal News' entry, in: <https://www.salisburyjournal.co.uk/news/16592364.muslim-woman-told-to-f-off-after-boris-johnsons-burqa-comments/>, retrieved on 23.8.2018

### **U.K.: Pork chops left on the car of Muslim family—**

**C**CTV footage captured the moment a man placed pork chops on the car of a Muslim family in London. The footage suggested that the incident occurred on the evening of 8 September 2018. The family felt targeted due to their ethnicity, and that some family members wear the hijab, but having lived in the area for decades, had no previous experience of racist or Islamophobic incidents. In 2017, vandalism was the third most common Islamophobic incident category. The perpetrator identified in the CCTV footage was a white male, described as being in his 30s or 40s.



See: TellMAMA News' entry, in: <https://tellmamauk.org/pork-chops-left-on-the-car-of-muslim-family/>, retrieved on 12.9.2018

### **Russia: Dozens of Muslims detained after Friday prayers near Moscow, reports say—**

**U**p to 100 Muslims were detained for several hours after Friday prayers outside Moscow, as reported media. The worshippers encountered dozens of masked men in uniforms as they filed out of a mosque in the town of Mytishchi north of Moscow. Eyewitness was cited as saying that a plainclothes officer had told the detained worshippers that units were called in response to complaints over a mass gathering. They ordered the worshippers to board two buses, where they were held for several hours.



See: The Moscow Times News' entry, in: <https://themoscowtimes.com/news/dozens-muslims-detained-after-friday-prayers-near-moscow-reports-say-63186>, retrieved on 16.10.2018



## V. Incidents Related to Hijab

### **Belgium: Men gravely assault Muslim woman in Belgium, rip off her hijab and shirt—**

Early July 2018, a 19-year-old woman was assaulted in a town near Brussels while walking alone in an alley. The men approached her and blocked her path before ripping her headscarf off. They did not stop there. They also tore up her shirt, exposing her upper body. As she attempted to escape, the men began calling her a “filthy Arab” before physically assaulting the woman. They pushed her to the ground and used a sharp object to cut parts of her body, according to media. The cuts were made to resemble the shape of a cross. The woman was the victim of a racially motivated hate crime in Belgium.



See: Stepfeed News’ entry, in: <https://stepfeed.com/men-gravely-assault-muslim-woman-in-belgium-rip-off-her-hijab-and-shirt-1578>, retrieved on 7.7.2018

### **Germany: Muslim patients targeted in knife attack—**



A man shouted Islamophobic slurs as several headscarved Muslim women were in the waiting room of a clinic owned by a Turkish doctor in the northwestern city of Moenschengladbach, as reported by media. He threatened medical assistants and patients with the knife, but was overpowered by three patients in the waiting room. One of the patients was slightly injured in the incident.

See: World Bulletin News’ entry, in: <https://www.worldbulletin.net/islamophobia/muslim-patients-targeted-in-knife-attack-h203772.html>, retrieved on 7.7.2018

### **U.K.: Another Islamophobic attack against Muslim girls—**

Police in London launched an investigation in July 2018 into a possible hate crime after a group of 5 people verbally abuse two Muslim girls. The police said that two of them pushed the girls into a corner by shouting and verbally abuse saying that they were uncomfortable that the train may get bombed.



See: World Bulletin News’ entry, in: <https://www.worldbulletin.net/islamophobia/another-islamophobic-attack-against-muslim-girls-h205914.html>, retrieved on 21.7.2018



## Margins

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from report and analysis provided by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations, New York.

<sup>2</sup> Excerpted from report and analysis provided by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the European Union, Brussels.

<sup>3</sup> Excerpted from report and analysis provided by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to the United Nations, Geneva.

<sup>4</sup> Excerpted from report and analysis provided by The Liaison Office of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in the UNESCO, Paris.

<sup>5</sup> **See:** BBC News entry "UK attitudes towards Islam 'concerning' after survey of 2,000 people", in: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsbeat/article/36346886/uk-attitudes-towards-islam-concerning-after-survey-of-2000-people>,

<sup>6</sup> **See:** The Guardian News entry "Europeans greatly overestimate Muslim population, poll shows", in: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/datablog/2016/dec/13/europeans-massively-overestimate-muslim-population-poll-shows>

<sup>7</sup> **See:** European Union Agency for Fundamental Human Rights news entr "Muslims in the EU: High levels of trust despite pervasive discrimination", in: <https://fra.europa.eu/en/press-release/2017/muslims-eu-high-levels-trust-despite-pervasive-discrimination>

<sup>8</sup> **See:** NY Times News' entry "After attacks in Paris, New York Muslims cope with a backlash" in: [http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/nyregion/im-frightened-after-paris-terrorist-attacks-new-york-city-muslims-cope-with-a-backlash.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2015/11/26/nyregion/im-frightened-after-paris-terrorist-attacks-new-york-city-muslims-cope-with-a-backlash.html?_r=0), retrieved on 26.11.2018

<sup>9</sup> **See:** TRT World News' entry "FBI data shows spike in US hate crimes", in: <http://www.thedailystar.net/world/woman-burqa-attacked-abused-berlin-1537900>, retrieved on 15.11.2018

<sup>10</sup> **See:** Washington Examiner News' entry "Poll:

Muslims 'insufficiently American'", in: <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/washington-secrets/poll-muslims-insufficiently-american>, retrieved on 27.6.2018

<sup>11</sup> **See:** The Siasat News' entry "74 pc Americans believe Muslims face discrimination: survey", in: <https://www.siasat.com/news/74-pc-americans-believe-muslims-face-discrimination-survey-1428309/>, retrieved on 6.11.2018

<sup>12</sup> **See:** i24 News' entry "40 percent of Americans say Islam 'is incompatible with US values': survey", in: <https://www.i24news.tv/en/news/international/americas/187699-181102-40-percent-of-americans-say-islam-is-incompatible-with-us-values-survey>, retrieved on 3.11.2018

<sup>13</sup> **See:** Pacific Standard News' entry "Islamophobic incidents in California have skyrocketed under Trump", in: <https://psmag.com/social-justice/islamophobic-incidents-in-california-have-skyrocketed-under-trump>, retrieved on 10.8.2018

<sup>14</sup> **See:** The College Fix News' entry "Anti-Muslim bullying on the rise in Philadelphia schools", in: <https://www.thecollegefix.com/claim-anti-muslim-bullying-on-the-rise-in-philadelphia-schools/>, retrieved on 24.7.2018

<sup>15</sup> **See:** CSIS News' entry "The rise of Far-Right Extremism in the United States", in: <https://www.csis.org/analysis/rise-far-right-extremism-united-states>, retrieved on 8.11.2018

<sup>16</sup> **See:** CNN News' entry "Terrorism deaths down in 2017, but far-right terrorism rising, report says", in: <https://edition.cnn.com/2018/12/05/politics/global-terrorism-index-2018/index.html>, retrieved on 7.12.2018

<sup>17</sup> **See:** The European Sting News' entry "Islamophobia is driving more US Muslims to become politically engaged, suggests report", in: <https://europeansting.com/2018/08/10/islamophobia-is-driving-more-us-muslims-to-become-politically-engaged-suggests-report/>, retrieved on 11.8.2018

<sup>18</sup> **See:** NBC News' entry "Hate crimes in Canada



shot up 47 percent, with Muslims, Jews and blacks most targeted", in: <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/hate-crimes-canada-shot-47-percent-muslims-jews-blacks-most-n943476>, retrieved on 5.12.2018

<sup>19</sup> **See:** The Daily Tar Heel News' entry "Muslim Students Association receives hate mail", in: <https://www.dailytarheel.com/article/2018/10/msa-hate-mail-muslim-students-association>, retrieved on 4.10.2018

<sup>20</sup> **See:** The Muslims News' entry "Attack on Canadian Muslim being probed as Islamophobic hate crime", in: <http://muslimnews.co.uk/news/islamophobia/canada-attack-canadian-muslim-probed-islamophobic-hate-crime/>, retrieved on 20.7.2018

<sup>21</sup> **See:** The Star Halifax News' entry "Halifax girl feels shaken after alleged anti-Muslim harassment", in: <https://www.thestar.com/halifax/2018/07/25/halifax-girl-feels-shaken-after-alleged-anti-muslim-harassment.html>, retrieved on 26.7.2018

<sup>22</sup> **See:** The Eagle News' entry "North Carolina GOP candidate Mark Harris believes islam is 'Satanic'", in: [https://www.theeagle.com/news/local/college-station-s-islamic-center-hosts-mosque-open-house/article\\_f9138965-be08-59b3-9dbc-d41c10c3eb33.html](https://www.theeagle.com/news/local/college-station-s-islamic-center-hosts-mosque-open-house/article_f9138965-be08-59b3-9dbc-d41c10c3eb33.html), retrieved on 5.11.2018

<sup>23</sup> **See:** The Daily Beast News' entry "'Those Motherf\*\*kers are dead meat': Far-Right militia threatens Muslims on leaked audio", in: <https://www.thedailybeast.com/those-motherfkers-are-dead-meat-far-right-militia-threatens-muslims-on-leaked-audio>, retrieved on 25.9.2018

<sup>24</sup> **See:** Daily Hampsire Gazette News' entry "Islamophobic flyers target congressional candidate", in: <https://www.gazettenet.com/Islamophobic-flyers-sent-to-voters-target-Amatul-Wadud-19297961>, retrieved on 7.8.2018

<sup>25</sup> **See:** Patch News' entry "Islamophobic Graffiti Targets Homer Glen Home", in: <https://patch.com/illinois/homerglen-lockport/islamaphobic-graffiti-found-homerglen-home>, retrieved on 21.9.2018

<sup>26</sup> **See:** Vox News' entry "An anti-Muslim narrative has shaped policy for decades. The travel ban will make it worse", in: <https://www.vox.com/first-person/2018/6/27/17510560/travel-ban-muslim-trump-is>

lamophobia, retrieved on 28.6.2018

<sup>27</sup> **See:** The Huffington Post News' entry "American kids are learning Islamophobia from their textbooks", in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/opinion-levinson-islamophobia-muslims-text-books\\_us\\_5b68a263e4b0de86f4a40f92](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/opinion-levinson-islamophobia-muslims-text-books_us_5b68a263e4b0de86f4a40f92), retrieved on 8.8.2018

<sup>28</sup> **See:** The Huffington Post News' entry "Donald Trump picks anti-Muslim official for U.S. Ambassador to UN", in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/heather-nauert-un-ambassador-islamophobia\\_us\\_5c0ad2a4e4b0a606a9a889b3](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/heather-nauert-un-ambassador-islamophobia_us_5c0ad2a4e4b0a606a9a889b3), retrieved on 7.12.2018

<sup>29</sup> **See:** USNews News' entry "Polls suggest Far-Right to gain ground in 2019 EU vote", in: <https://www.usnews.com/news/world/articles/2018-09-12/polls-suggest-far-right-to-gain-ground-in-2019-eu-vote>, retrieved on 13.9.2018

<sup>30</sup> **See:** Middle East Monitor News' entry "Attacks against Muslims rise in France", in: <https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20180607-report-attacks-against-muslim-rise-in-france/>, retrieved on 8.6.2018

<sup>31</sup> **See:** Ahval News' entry "Anti-Muslim hate on rise in Germany, Europe", in: <https://ahvalnews.com/islamophobia/anti-muslim-hate-rise-germany-europe>, retrieved on 14.11.2018

<sup>32</sup> **See:** Axios News' entry "Far-right Alternative for Germany party surges in new poll", in: <https://www.axios.com/german-far-right-party-surges-poll-3cc7bb05-b9aa-49eb-a098-1faea430e0ed.html>, retrieved on 5.9.2018

<sup>33</sup> **See:** The National News' entry "Poll suggests backing for UK anti-Islam party", in: <https://www.thenational.ae/world/europe/poll-suggests-backing-for-uk-anti-islam-party-1.752965>, retrieved on 23.7.2018

<sup>34</sup> **See:** The Express Tribune News' entry "Over half of England, Wales hate crime directed at Muslims", in: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1827801/9-half-england-wales-hate-crime-directed-muslims/>, retrieved on 18.10.2018

<sup>35</sup> **See:** AA News' entry "Far-right extremism on the rise in Austria", in: <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/far-right-extremism-on-the-rise-in-austria/1246423>, re-



trieved on 5.9.2018

<sup>36</sup> **See:** Hurriyet Daily News' entry "Suspected Neo-Nazis vandalize mosque in Germany", in: <http://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/suspected-neo-nazis-vandalize-mosque-in-germany-137420>, retrieved on 2.10.2018

<sup>37</sup> **See:** Yeni Safak News' entry "Swedish official faces probe for Islamophobic remark", in: <https://www.yenisafak.com/en/world/swedish-official-faces-probe-for-islamophobic-remark-3465837>, retrieved on 10.11.2018

<sup>38</sup> **See:** The Manchester Tab News' entry "Islamophobic posters found on Manchester campus", in: <https://thetab.com/uk/manchester/2018/09/26/exclusive-racist-posters-found-on-manchester-campus-36944>, retrieved on 27.9.2018

<sup>39</sup> **See:** Business Insider News' entry "Boris Johnson insisted that 'Islam is the problem' and Islamophobia is a 'natural reaction'", in: <https://www.businessinsider.com/boris-johnson-islam-is-the-problem-and-islamophobia-is-a-natural-reaction-2018-8>, retrieved on 7.8.2018

<sup>40</sup> **See:** Huffington Post News' entry "'Punish A Muslim' letter writer pleads guilty to soliciting murder, other charges", in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/punish-a-muslim-letter-writer-david-parham-pleads-guilty\\_us\\_5bc49c4ee4b01a01d68cd65c](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/punish-a-muslim-letter-writer-david-parham-pleads-guilty_us_5bc49c4ee4b01a01d68cd65c), retrieved on 16.10.2018

<sup>41</sup> **See:** The Conversation News' entry "British Muslims will live with an intolerable burden of uncertainty under new counter-terrorism bill", in: <http://theconversation.com/british-muslims-will-live-with-an-intolerable-burden-of-uncertainty-under-new-counter-terrorism-bill-105716>, retrieved on 14.11.2018

<sup>42</sup> **See:** The Siasat Daily News' entry "France mulls over imposing 'halal tax' on Muslims", in: <https://www.siasat.com/news/france-mulls-over-imposing-halal-tax-muslims-1407084/>, retrieved on 16.9.2018

<sup>43</sup> **See:** The Lincoln Tab News' entry "Lincoln University defends lecturer who tweeted 'terror attacks were carried out by Muslims because of Islam'", in: <https://thetab.com/uk/lincoln/2018/10/05/lincoln-university-defends-lecturer-who-tweeted-terror-attacks-were-carried-out-by-muslims-because-of-islam-8144>, retrieved on 6.10.2018

<sup>44</sup> **See:** The Times News' entry "'Islam-free' ads show

face of AfD — Germany's far right", in: <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/islam-free-ads-show-face-of-afd-germanys-far-right-v0t9lhpz6>, retrieved on 17.9.2018

<sup>45</sup> **See:** The Guardian News' entry "Bristol bus driver disciplined for asking Muslim woman to remove face veil", in: <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/10/bristol-bus-driver-muslim-woman-remove-face-veil>, retrieved on 11.8.2018

<sup>46</sup> **See:** Daily Sabah News' entry "Mosque in north-western Germany vandalized with racist slurs, pork meat", in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/islamophobia/2018/09/10/mosque-in-northwestern-germany-vandalized-with-racist-slurs-pork-meat>, retrieved on 11.9.2018

<sup>47</sup> **See:** Daily Star News' entry "UKIP calls for 'Muslim-only' prison as party veers right", in: <https://www.dailystar.co.uk/news/latest-news/731519/ukip-conference-muslim-only-prisons-tommy-robinson-nigel-farage>, retrieved on 23.9.2017

<sup>48</sup> **See:** The Rebel News' entry "We need a 'German Islam,' says interior ministry", in: [https://www.therebel.media/top\\_10\\_salvini\\_wants\\_new\\_mosque\\_requests\\_surveyed\\_documented\\_controlled\\_italianized](https://www.therebel.media/top_10_salvini_wants_new_mosque_requests_surveyed_documented_controlled_italianized), retrieved on 6.9.2018

<sup>49</sup> **See:** The Huffington Post News' entry "Far-Right German leader rails against Toblerone for halal certification", in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/toblerone-halal-certification-afd-germany\\_us\\_5c1d377be4b08aaf7a88ad94](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/toblerone-halal-certification-afd-germany_us_5c1d377be4b08aaf7a88ad94), retrieved on 22.12.2018

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<sup>57</sup> **See:** The Huffington Post News' entry "Far-Right Norwegian politicians nominate Trump for Nobel Peace Prize", in: [https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-nobel-peace-prize-nomination\\_us\\_5b213c0ee4b09d7a3d79809d](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-nobel-peace-prize-nomination_us_5b213c0ee4b09d7a3d79809d), retrieved on 14.6.2018

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<sup>64</sup> **See:** The Week News' entry "How Matteo Salvini is creating a 'climate of hate' in Italy", in: <https://www.theweek.co.uk/italy/95465/how-matteo-salvini-is-creating-a-climate-of-hate-in-italy>, retrieved on 1.8.2018

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<sup>92</sup> **See** <https://www.ohchr.org/en/countries/asiaregion/pages/cnindex.aspx>, UN CERD/C/CHN/CO/14-17, 19 September 2018.

<sup>93</sup> **See:** European Parliament News' entry, in: <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/sides/getDoc.do?pubRef=-//EP//TEXT+TA+P8-TA-2018-0377+0+DOC+XML+V0//EN&language=EN>, retrieved on 5 October 2018

<sup>94</sup> Excerpt from analysis by Ewelina U. Ochab, a human rights advocate and author of the book "Never Again: Legal Responses to a Broken Promise in the Middle East." **See:** Forbes News' entry, in: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/ewelinaochab/2018/11/03/forced-re-education-of-muslims-in-china/#653093cc59ed>, retrieved on 4.11.2018

<sup>95</sup> **See:** ABC News entry "China bans list of Islamic names in restive Xinjiang region", in: <http://abcnews.go.com/search?searchtext=China%20bans%20list%20of%20Islamic%20names%20in%20restive%20Xinjiang%20region>, retrieved on 28.4.2017

<sup>96</sup> **See:** India Times News entry "China Puts A Ban On «Long Beards» And Veils In Public, Adding To The List Of Most Ridiculous Rules", in: <http://www.indiatimes.com/news/world/china-puts-a-ban-on-long-beards-and-veils-in-public-adding-to-the-list-of-most-ridiculous-rules-275238.html>, retrieved on 10.4.2017

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<sup>98</sup> **See:** The Times of India News' entry, in: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/world/china/china-and-its-relationship-with-islam/articleshow/65401765.cms>, retrieved on 14.8.2018

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<sup>100</sup> **See:** The Guardian News' entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/sep/14/china-claims-muslim-internment-camps-provide-professional-training>, retrieved on 15.9.2018.

<sup>101</sup> Sinicisation refers to non-Chinese societies being forced to conform to Chinese culture, particularly that of the ethnic Han majority. This includes dress code, religion, culture, politics and language.

<sup>102</sup> **See:** The Guardian news' entry, in: <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/oct/14/sinicisation-of-muslims-in-xinjiang-must-go-on-says-chinese-official>, retrieved on 15.10.2018.

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<sup>104</sup> **See:** The Sun News' entry "'They can't summon as much violence as I can': Leader of far-right 'true blue crew' vile boast as his supporters clash with anti-racism supporters at Melbourne 'flag pride rally'", in: <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5879167/Far-right-campaigners-escorted-riot-police-rally-Melbourne.html>, retrieved on 25.6.2018

<sup>105</sup> **See:** Economic Times News' entry "Australian Senator compares Muslims with 'poisonous jelly beans'", in: <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/international/world-news/australian-senator-compares-muslims-with-poisonous-jelly-beans/articleshow/65412704.cms>, retrieved on 16.8.2018

<sup>106</sup> **See:** News.com News' entry "Senator Cory Bernardi has again renewed his push for a burqa ban", in: <https://www.news.com.au/national/politics/sena->



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<sup>108</sup> **See:** Reuters News' entry "India expels seven Rohingya to Myanmar, rights groups fearful for their fate", in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-india/india-expels-seven-rohingya-to-myanmar-rights-groups-fearful-for-their-fate-idUSKCN1ME0G4>, retrieved on 5.10.2018

<sup>109</sup> **See:** Money Control News' entry "100 hate crimes committed in 2018 so far, mostly against Muslims, Dalits: Report", in: <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/crime/islamic-book-shop-bomb-plot-david-moffatt-catholic-kill-all-muslims-london-cricklewood-broadway-a7874506.html>, retrieved on 18.7.2018

<sup>110</sup> **See:** The Telegraph News' entry "Indian village bans Muslim names for children, public prayer and beards after row over dead calf", in: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/09/20/indian-village-bans-muslim-names-children-public-prayer-beards/>, retrieved on 21.9.2018

<sup>111</sup> **See:** Independent News' entry "Norway has just voted to ban Burkas and Niqabs in schools", in: <https://www.indy100.com/article/norway-burka-ban-niqab-schools-full-face-veils-parliament-bill-8387476>, retrieved on 8.6.2018

<sup>112</sup> **See:** The Hill News' entry "Netherlands approves ban on face veils in public spaces", in: <https://thehill.com/policy/international/394316-netherlands-approves-ban-on-face-veils-in-public-spaces>, retrieved on 27.6.2018

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<sup>114</sup> **See:** News.com News' entry "Senator Cory Bernardi has again renewed his push for a burqa ban",

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<sup>116</sup> **See:** India Blooms News' entry "Polish minister says no to burqa; no mosques in Europe until Saudi Arabia allows a church in its vicinity", in: <https://www.indiablooms.com/world-details/F/16856/polish-minister-says-no-to-burqa-no-mosques-in-europe-until-saudi-arabia-allows-a-church-in-its-vicinity.html>, retrieved on 1.9.2018

<sup>117</sup> **See:** Egyptian Street News' entry "Algeria Bans the Niqab in the Workplace", in: <https://egyptianstreets.com/2018/10/19/algeria-bans-the-niqab-in-the-workplace/>, retrieved on 20.10.2018

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<sup>120</sup> **See:** Daily Sabah News' entry "Banning headscarf-wearing Nigerian girls from school amounts to 'religious bigotry,' Muslim body says", in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/africa/2018/11/17/banning-headscarf-wearing-nigerian-girls-from-school-amounts-to-religious-bigotry-muslim-body-says>, retrieved on 18.11.2018

<sup>121</sup> **See:** Reuters News' entry "U.N. sets up body to prepare Myanmar atrocity prosecution files", in: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-myanmar-rohingya-un/un-sets-up-team-to-prepare-myanmar-prosecution-files-idUSKCN1M71W0>, retrieved on 28.9.2018

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<sup>123</sup> **See:** Siasat Daily News' entry "International Criminal Court begins inquiry into atrocities against Rohingya Muslims", in: <https://www.siasat.com/news/international-criminal-court-begins-inquiry-atrocities-against-rohingya-muslims-1410317/>, retrieved on 20.9.2018

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<sup>128</sup> **See:** AJC News' entry "Missouri man gets 2 years in prison for threats to Georgia mosque", in: <https://www.ajc.com/news/crime--law/missouri-man-gets-years-prison-for-threats-georgia-mosque/ndK7EsMR2t-Mhz8vr5WF2cl/>, retrieved on 26.7.2018

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<sup>131</sup> **See:** Fox News' entry "US Coast Guard member 'removed' after making 'offensive' OK sign on live TV", in: <https://www.foxnews.com/us/us-coast-guard-member-removed-after-making-offensive-ok-sign-on-live-tv>, retrieved on 16.9.2018

<sup>132</sup> **See:** TPM News' entry "Army Director loses senior immigration job after questions about Islamophobic posts", in: <https://talkingpointsmemo.com/news/army-director-loses-senior-immigration-job-after-questions-about-islamophobic-posts>, retrieved on 2.9.2018

<sup>133</sup> **See:** The Vindicator News' entry "\$1.5M settlement for Muslim workers fired in prayer dispute", in: <http://www.vindy.com/news/2018/sep/15/muslims-fired-in-dispute-over-prayer-bre/>, retrieved on 16.9.2018

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<sup>135</sup> **See:** BBC News' entry "Man in court over London 'mosque terror plot'", in: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-46103487>, retrieved on 7.11.2018

<sup>136</sup> **See:** RT News' entry "'Anti-Islamic' terror suspect 'plotted to blow up mosque to avenge death of Manchester Arena child'", in: <https://www.rt.com/uk/443434-terrorist-mosque-attack-manchester/>, retrieved on 9.11.2018

<sup>137</sup> **See:** Dutch News' entry "Man arrested for planning a terrorist attack on Muslims", in: <https://www.dutch-news.nl/news/2018/08/man-arrested-for-planning-a-terrorist-attack-on-muslims/>, retrieved on 30.8.2018

<sup>138</sup> **See:** The Local News' entry "France 'charges 10 ultra-right suspects over plot to attack Muslims'", in: <https://www.thelocal.fr/20180628/france-charges-10-ultra-right-suspects-over-plot-to-attack-muslims>, retrieved on 29.6.2018

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<sup>143</sup> **See:** EU Observer News' entry "Wake-up call on European Day Against Islamophobia", in: <https://euobserver.com/opinion/142921>, retrieved on 22.9.2018

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<sup>159</sup> **See:** Daily Sabah News' entry "Canadian couple helps Rohingya Muslims, raising global awareness", in: <https://www.dailysabah.com/feature/2018/08/06/canadian-couple-helps-rohingya-muslims-raising-global-awareness>, retrieved on 6.8.2018

<sup>160</sup> **See:** CBS DFW News' entry "Burned Mosque in Texas Rebuilt, Reopens with \$1.1M Donations", in: <https://dfw.cbslocal.com/2018/10/01/burned-mosque-in-texas-rebuilt-reopens-with-1-1m-donations/>, retrieved on 2.10.2018

<sup>161</sup> **See:** The Dallas Morning News' entry "FBI investigating after 911 caller threatened to 'kill everyone inside' Arlington mosque during event", in: <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/arlington/2018/11/04/911-caller-threatened-kill-everyone-inside-arlington-mosque-event-police-say>, retrieved on 6.11.2018

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<sup>171</sup> **See:** Star Tribune News' entry "Jews, Muslims in Berlin team up on bike rides against hatred", in: <http://www.startribune.com/jews-muslims-in-berlin-team-up-on-bike-rides-against-hatred/486387751/>, retrieved on 25.6.2018

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**Note:** Some Pictures in this report were taken from open resources that cannot be mentioned one by one.