

Dossier

NSU Extreme Right-wing Terrorism

**Koordinationsrat der Muslime (KRM)
(Coordination Council of Muslims) (CRM)**

In November 2012

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The Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) was founded in March 2007 by the four large umbrella associations DITIB, VIKZ, Islamrat (Islamic Council) and the ZMD (Central Council of Muslims in Germany). It organises the representation of Muslims in Germany and is the contact body for politics and society.

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1. Introduction

The revelation of so called right-wing terrorism committed by the *Nationalsozialistischen Untergrund* (National Socialist Underground or NSU) has made us acutely aware of the security issues facing minorities and, in particular, Muslims in Germany. For over a decade extreme right-wing terrorists were able to leave a trail of blood through Germany, which involved the cold-blooded murder of 10 people, without being brought to justice. A year after the revelation of the perpetrators the case has still not been resolved. It remains unclear whether state authorities failed and what supporters this group had beyond their members.

Instead investigator attention was focused on the relatives of the victims early on. For years xenophobia was not considered a possible motive of the crimes. Security authorities spent years searching for the perpetrators amongst the alleged Turkish mafia circles or in Turkey itself. Terms such as “Döner-Morde” (“kebab murders”) or “Task Force Bosphorus” gained currency in the media and gave the impression that the victims were somehow complicit with their murderers.

The *Koordinationsrat der Muslime* (KRM) (Coordination Council of Muslims or CRM) has summarised the history of the NSU murders and the reactions to these crimes as well as the role of the government and its security services in the present analysis from the point of view of religious communities encompassed within the KRM (CRM).

At the same time the present dossier does not only consider the aspects immediately connected with the NSU murders, but also reflects the entire social development using recent studies, for example the image of Islam or the Muslims in society as a whole. The conclusion of this analysis presents a catalogue of demands by the KRM (CRM). Within this expectations and demands of the KRM (CRM) member associations in connection with the NSU terror are formulated.

2. Reactions before and after revelation.

The way politicians and the media handled the murder cases attributed to the NSU has greatly unsettled Muslims in Germany. Political actors and the media failed to consider a xenophobic background of these crimes over a long period of time. Muslim confidence in the German constitutional state has been shattered due to the manner and method, in which these murder cases were handled. An investigation of this issue is vital in recovering this trust. Government institutions must question why a xenophobic background was dismissed for such a long time. Were structural problems or personnel problems to blame? What role did the intelligence services play in this scandal? And did policy makers draw the necessary conclusions? These questions must be answered in the course of the investigation.

2.1 Role of the Office for the Protection of the Constitution

The political and media debates revolve around the role of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution in monitoring the NSU, in particular the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution and its former president Helmut Roewer¹. The Interior Minister of Thuringia Jörg Geibert doubts whether the authorities of the region worked flawlessly from January 1998 in pursuing the trio Beate Zschäpe, Uwe Mundlos and Uwe Böhnhardt, who were also termed as the “Zwickau terrorist cell” in the media, and set up a commission.² On the other hand Roewer suspects a connection between the terrorist cell and the Jena police who had previously prevented an arrest in 1998.³

On 13th November 2011 the press reported that so-called “legal illegal documents” were secured in the rubble of the house destroyed by fire.⁴ This term denotes officially fraudulent ID documents, which are issued by the intelligence authorities to conceal their colleagues. However, on 22nd November 2011 the German press agency dpa correctly stated that the passport concerned had been applied for in the correct manner by an NSU supporter in their own name. At the same time they submitted a photo of Uwe Mundlos to the registration office.

On 18th November 2011 the public television station MDR reported that the Thuringia

¹ Christiane Kohl: Neonazi-Anschlagsserie und der Verfassungsschutz: 24 Aktenordner - und nichts fiel auf. In: Süddeutsche Zeitung, 14th November 2011.

² Verfolgung Thüringer Rechtsextremer. Innenminister zweifelt an eigenen Behörden. In: faz.net. 12th November 2011.

³ Extreme right-wing terrorist cells: previous federal judge Schäfer should explain the role of the authorities. Ex constitutional protector raises allegation against the police. MDR, 15th November 2011.

⁴ Günther Lachmann, Florian Flade: Rechter Terror: Die mögliche Verbindung der Täter zum Geheimdienst. „Legale illegale Papiere“ sichergestellt. In: Welt Online. 13th November 2011.

Special Weapons and Tactics squad was on standby to seize the three suspects tracked down in 1998 or 1999. Police investigators found and reported the three suspects in Chemnitz by. It should have been possible to seize the group. According to MDR details the operation was stopped shortly before deployment of the SEK leading to a barrage of complaints to police headquarters filed by participating officials. Even the police investigators were recalled on instruction of the LKA. The Thuringian State Office of Criminal Investigation disputes this version, the former interior minister Richard Dewes refuses to comment maintaining that he had to adhere to “legal regulations” as the then office holder.⁵ The Spiegel reports of at least three confidential informants in connection with Mundlos, Böhnhardt and Zschäpe during the 90s.⁶

An investigation instigated after the death of both men in 2011 by Thuringia’s Interior Minister Jörg Geibert and conducted by the previous federal judge Gerhard Schäfer, should explain the exact circumstances of the failed arrests of 1998.⁷

In the middle of December the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution knew at least temporarily of the whereabouts of the group which had gone underground. A surveillance photo of the trio from 15th May 2000 in Chemnitz provided confirmation, which ended up in the files of the Thuringian Office of Criminal Investigation. The photograph supposedly originated from the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution. In November Helmut Roewer announced that the manhunt for the right-wing extremists in hiding had unfortunately been “unsuccessful”.

In addition according to *Bild am Sonntag* the Thuringian State Office for the Protec-

⁵ “Zwickauer Trio”: Thüringer SEK kurz vor Zugriff „zurückgepiffen“. MDR, 18th November 2011.

⁶ NSU-Ermittlungen: Verfassungsschutz führte drei V-Leute im Umfeld des Terror-Trios. In: Spiegel Online. 19th November 2011.

⁷ Pannen bei Neonazi-Fahndung: Thüringer Minister attackiert Ermittler. In: Spiegel Online. 16th November 2011.

tion of the Constitution had made a payment to the trio from Zwickau. Afterwards the intelligence service sent DM 2000.00 to the terrorist cells for false passports via middle men. This was reported on 6th December 2011 by an employee of the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution before a secret meeting of the Thuringian state parliament control commission. According to statements of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution its authorities knew that the neo-Nazi group urgently needed money at that time for new passports from tapped telephone calls. The cash payment led to the receiving of instructions about the whereabouts as well as the code names of the extreme right-wing terrorists. In 2000 the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution delivered the money to the NPD functionary and confidential informant Tino Brandt. However, since the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution did not inform the registration offices Zschäpe, Mundlos and Böhnhardt were able to go underground and remain undetected with their new identities. Shortly afterwards the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution confirmed that the delivery of the money had failed, because a middle man had used the money for himself. According to a subsequent article in the *Berliner Zeitung*, which loosely named “security sources” as their source, the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution had also sabotaged the police investigation at the end of the 1990s. According to the newspaper the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution had given its confidential informant Tino Brandt surveillance information, which had been collected about him. Distrust and information blockades between the authorities involved were so extensive that in several cases surveillance officers were surveillance by officers of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution. The *Berliner Zeitung* and *Spiegel Online* referred to statements made by Tino Brandt Uwe Mundlos’ father as further evidence of the competitive strategies of the police and the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution.⁸

⁸Thüringer Verfassungsschutz: Pleiten, Flops und Pannen, Spiegel Online, 19th Dezember 2011.

Other state constitutional protection agencies were also publically criticised together with the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution. According to allegations an official of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Hessen, who was present at the crime scene, left the crime scene without reporting himself as a witness.⁹ Also authorities in Lower Saxony acknowledged substantial errors in the surveillance of the alleged backer Holger G. who was later categorised as an accomplice.¹⁰ A statement of the Bavarian Interior Minister Joachim Herrmann of January 2012 indicates that Tino Brandt had already been the subject of surveillance between the early 1990s to 2002 by the Bavarian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution however, had not been contacted. In addition, the Thuringian and Bavarian State Constitution Agencies had shared information concerning that matter.

In December 2011 it became known that important evidence, collected from the earlier investigations of the main Jena perpetrators Zschäpe, Mundlos and Böhnhardt, had been irretrievably lost. According to the *Frankfurter Rundschau* the four pipe bombs seized in January 1998 and surveillance tapes of suspected supporters of the missing trio had been correctly destroyed years before the investigating authorities in Thuringia flushed out the group. According to information from security sources this significantly hampers the investigations.¹¹

The results of the investigations suggest that the federal states were anxious to “systematically keep the Federal Attorney General on the side-lines of the proceedings”; the Federal Public Prosecutors had to rely on newspaper articles to determine whether there was enough evidence to take over the case.¹²

⁹ „Nationalsozialistischer Untergrund“: Verfassungsschützer womöglich in „Döner-Mord“ involviert. In: FAZ. 14th November 2011.

¹⁰ Neonazi-Mordserie: Niedersachsen räumt Panne bei Terrorfahndung ein. In: Süddeutsche Zeitung. 16th November 2011.

¹¹ „Beweismittel gegen Zwickauer Zelle vernichtet“, Frankfurter Rundschau, 23th December 2012.

¹² „Chaos und Streit bei Ermittlungen zu NSU-Morden“, Süddeutsche Zeitung, 5th May 2012.

2.2 Media opinion prior to uncovering the NSU

The media saw the victims' own criminal activities within Germany's Turkish community as the cause of the murders of small-scale entrepreneurs with migrant backgrounds. For years journalists as well as investigators looked into a range of different motives, yet ignored motives involving the extreme right wing. Not only did the police see no connection between the murders, as they had already linked the murders to the criminal milieu early on, even though there was evidence and this assumption was based on mere speculation. „This points to a professional“, *Die Welt* quotes an investigator as saying and suspects a „contract killing from one of the gangs operating from the mountains of Anatolia „, later traced back to a trading company in Istanbul, which is involved in drug smuggling and human trafficking all over Europe.¹³ *Focus* quotes task force director Wolfgang Geier: The murders were „carried out in a very rational, methodical and planned manner“. He sees „absolutely no sign“ of xenophobic motives. *Bild* specifies „four hot leads“: „Drugs mafia, organised crime, protection money, money laundering“. According to the *Frankfurter Rundschau* „xenophobic motives suggest themselves „. However, there are no indicators of a political motive.¹⁴

The investigators may have „got tea with mint but no answers to their questions“, the *Hamburger Abendblatt* writes of the Turkish community. Even *Der Spiegel* complains: „The impenetrable parallel world of the Turks protects the killers.“ A Bavarian senior prosecutor talks about the Turkish acquaintances of the victims: he had the impression that „someone knows more, but isn't talking“. Task force head Mr Geier tells the *Süddeutschen*, „in light of the wall of silence „ he has the impression that „the Turks have still not arrived in this society „.¹⁵

¹³„Eine Bande aus den Bergen Anatoliens“, taz, 21st November 2011.

¹⁴ibidem

¹⁵ibidem

At the start of 2011 *Der Spiegel* still suspected a “powerful alliance between right-wing nationalist Turks, the Turkish secret service and gangsters” were behind the crimes. In August 2011 the magazine went even further down this line: it specified a witness, who could lead the investigator “to a romantic villa near the Bodensee”. The weapon used in the crime lay in safe there. The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution denies this: „It is complete and total fiction“. *Der Spiegel* writes: „The murders, as much the investigators know, are the settling of a score for debts from criminal businesses or revenge for disloyalty.“

Der Spiegel describes how the Federal Republic found itself in a “state of shock” after the discovery of the extreme right-wing cell.¹⁶ Even after the twin attacks in Norway in July 2011 the Federal Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich explained he saw no immediate danger of extreme right-wing terrorist attacks in Germany.¹⁷ Federal Prosecutor General Rainer Griesbaum seemed surprised “since we could not establish any terrorist structures within the extreme right-wing scene with our investigations over recent years”.¹⁸

Markus Horeld (*DIE ZEIT*) thinks confidence in the constitutional state has been shattered since this scandal throws up questions which must be answered:

„In a country where nearly everything is monitored how is it possible to enter a shop, photograph the owner, shoot him, photograph him again and even record the removal of the coffin?

What good is a Office for the Protection of the Constitution that pays right-wing extremist informants connected with the serial killers yet learns nothing? Or perhaps even worse: does not share this information with the police?

¹⁶Severin Weiland: Zwickauer Zelle: Republik im Schockzustand. In: Spiegel Online. 13th November 2011.

¹⁷Attentat in Norwegen: Welche Gefahr droht in Deutschland durch radikalisierte Einzeltäter? In: Der Tagesspiegel. 24th June 2011.

¹⁸Terror-Enthüllungen: Thüringen stoppt bundesweite Imagekampagne. Bundesanwaltschaft war „überrascht“. In: Spiegel Online. 17th November 2011, retrieved on 25st November 2011.¹⁹Markus Horeld: Rechtsterrorismus: Das Vertrauen in den Rechtsstaat ist erschüttert.

How can three people disappear without a trace for thirteen years in Germany? ¹⁹

In view of the failures and the possible entanglements of informants calls for fundamental reforms of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution can be heard.²⁰ In *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* Nils Minkmar quotes the terror expert Bruce Riedel with his essential point “If someone can escape an intensive manhunt for many years, then he must enjoy state protection” and describes the work of the intelligence services in the case of the NSU as a „complete failure“. The time has come “to abolish it”, as ten people could still be alive if they had done their work properly.²¹

In contrast to the public Muslims in Germany already doubt the objectivity of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. Islamic organisations, the mosque communities and practicing orthodox Muslims in Germany were also repeatedly viewed as potential “perpetrators or supporters” by the constitutional protection authorities. The other possibility that Muslims are or could become victims of terrorism was also criminally neglected. As it stands there is already a long history of different types of terrorism against Muslims in Germany. And the futile efforts of Islamic organisations to obtain precise information about the “Zwickau List” also fit into this picture. In line with this Muslim functionaries first found out through the press that they were being targeted by terrorists. After police complained of poor collaboration with Muslims in fighting terrorism, the Muslim organisations now accuse the police of poor collaboration. The authorities only exchange minimal intelligence with the parties concerned. In the meantime some Muslim organisations have received standard letters about their names being on blacklists.

By contrast the failures in the fight against extremists are painstakingly listed in the media. However, Muslims in Germany are unable to forget that the media not only invented the degrading term “kebab murder”, but also adopted the official “mafia theory”

¹⁹Markus Horeld: Rechtsterrorismus: Das Vertrauen in den Rechtsstaat ist erschüttert. In: Zeit Online. 14th November 2011.

²⁰Yassin Musharbash: Sicherheitsbehörden in der Kritik: Was die Geheimdienste ändern müssen. In: Spiegel Online. 18th November 2011.

²¹Nils Minkmar: Geheimdienste: Hauptsache, es macht peng! In: FAZ. 20th November 2011

about the perpetrators (and victims) for years without scrutiny. The Turkish media were the first to speculate about extreme right-wing motives.

In terms of content the Muslim community also criticises the work of the security authorities with respect to the surveillance of Muslims. The German authorities' "favourite enemy" was so called "Islamism", which does not have a critical lobby. However, the ambiguous term "Islamism", which quickly puts respectable Muslims in the same league as mass murderers, allows severe direct and indirect basic rights violations. The rash equating of religious orthodoxy to modern ideology is misleading. In addition, the intelligence reports, which are in parts alarmingly superficial, have long since undermined confidence in the authorities. The picture is completed by numerous "scaremongers", authors, journalists and consultants who are critical of Islam and yet assist the authorities.

Long drawn out investigations against Muslim functionaries, who have been portrayed by the media as a potential "criminal association" and in the meantime have led to nothing, has also weakened confidence in the constitutional state. A further consequence was the growing impression amongst sections of the non-Muslim population that Islam was part of a threatening situation.

Many Muslims believe that the debate about shady confidential informants, who also contribute to subversive structures, cannot be limited to the right-wing scene. A debate about the role of informants in developing hostile organizations is long overdue.

The reports about Office for the Protection of the Constitution staff with extreme right-wing tendencies are also alarming. Without a doubt there are elements within the security apparatus and amongst the advisors to the authorities, whose attitudes towards Islam are not objective, but are as subjective as they are questionable. There is also no uniform assessment of Muslim sentiments amongst federal states regardless of the government. The origins of the label "Islamist" remain vague but disastrous in a social context. The interaction of intelligence reports and a mostly unquestioning media greatly increases the power of the administrative bodies and their Islam advisors. Legal action against false or polemic reports takes so long that damage to the reputation of the persons concerned cannot be prevented, regardless of the outcome.

This hypothesis of turning a blind eye to the right-wing extremism, which can also be explained by the political orientation of some functionaries in security issues, may also illuminate the hysteria and excessiveness occasionally observed with respect to Muslims. Perhaps this is where the key to explaining the creeping disregard of the extreme right scene lies and the dramatic consequences we now observe.

In April 2012 the former Federal Interior Minister Otto Schily admitted an error of judgement when he claimed as then responsible Interior Minister that the terrorist bombing in Cologne did not have any terrorist motives:

“The Federal Interior Minister and I carry the political responsibility for not tracking down the NSU terrorist group earlier”, Schily told *Tagesspiegel*. He conceded that he made a mistake by stating that initial investigations did not reveal any terrorist motives on the day after the bomb attack by the NSU in June 2004 in Cologne. “In the meantime we have come to realise that this was a serious mistake”, stated Schily. With “we” he meant his former colleague in North Rhine-Westphalia Fritz Behrens (SPD). He made the false assessment in a joint statement with Schily. ²²

The *Tagesspiegel* emphasises that the minister’s false prognosis could have had grave consequences for the work of the police and public prosecutor’s office by directing their investigations on criminal foreigners.

Since no political motive was recognised by the prosecutors the Federal Prosecutors Office responsible for terrorist cases, which initiated a test procedure, was not authorised.²³

²²„Schily gibt schweren Irrtum zu“, *Tagesspiegel*, 19th April 2012.

²³ibidem

2.3 Government reaction to the NSU scandal

Commemoration of the NSU victims:

On 21st November 2011 a minute of silence was held in the Bundestag (Germany's parliament) by representatives and a unanimous declaration against extremist violence was read subsequent to a controversial debate. At the same time Federal President Norbert Lammert issued an apology in the name of all representatives to all relatives of the victims. "He was ashamed that the security authorities were unable to expose or prevent the crimes planned and committed over the years."²⁴

In the previous debate Federal Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich (CSU) also called for zero tolerance towards xenophobia. He expressed support for a ban of the NPD if the proceedings had good prospects. However, this is not the only subject to debate. During a central commemoration in the Berlin Concert Hall on 23rd February 2012 Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel asked the relatives of the victims for forgiveness for false suspicion. She described the murders as "a disgrace for our country" and with a view to the perpetrators posed the question "... who or what influences ... such extremist perpetrators". The President of the Turkish Community in Germany, Kenan Kolat, criticised the commemoration. The statements made by politicians subsequent to the arson attacks in Mölln and Solingen in the 1990s would be just as applicable today. Mr Kolat regrets the absence of a clear strategy against social racism from the federal government.²⁵

²⁴Bundestag bittet Angehörige der Opfer um Verzeihung, Die Zeit of 22nd November 2011.

²⁵Opfer des Rechtsterrors: Merkel bittet Angehörige um Verzeihung, Spiegel of 23rd Februar 2012.

Plaques and the renaming of streets:

Seven cities, in which the NSU committed the murders, want to commemorate the victims with plaques and by renaming streets. In each of the seven cities all ten victims of the extreme right-wing murderers will be commemorated. The victims will be remembered on the proposed plaques and it will be pointed out that the investigating authorities avoided the xenophobic connection between the criminal acts for a long period. The inscription is proposed to read as follows: “Neo-Nazi criminals murdered ten people in seven German towns between 2000 and 2007: nine fellow citizens, who found a new home in Germany with their families, and a police woman. We are dismayed and ashamed that these violent terrorist acts were not recognised over the years for what they were: murders in contempt for humankind. We say: “No more!”

Parliamentary investigative committee

The Bundestag established an investigative committee to elucidate the NSU murders. Its task is to investigate the errors, which were made by both the police and the intelligence service while investigating the murder series, which a neo national socialist terrorist cell was able to carry out undisturbed by security authorities.

The main person in the first hearing of the investigative committee was Barbara John, who had been Commissioner for Foreigners' Affairs for the Senate of Berlin for 22 years and currently presides over the Berlin Association of Welfare Organizations. Since 20th December she has been the ombudswoman for the bereaved families of the victims murdered by the NSU. She is their first contact person and her job is to provide practical assistance. The task is not easy, since approximately 70 persons qualify for assistance. The federal government has not set aside an office for this purpose. Instead she uses the rooms of the German Association of Welfare Organizations. She even has to pay the accrued telephone bills out of her own pocket.²⁶

Ms John does not only maintain contact with the relatives, but also their lawyers, the various ministries, the attorney general and deals with the offices and authorities who repeatedly bring the bereaved to the point of despair with their bureaucratic rigidity. In addition the ombudswoman must fight to ensure that the EUR 10,000 which some have received from a Justice Ministry victim fund is not credited to other state social services. John cites cases, in which the authorities refuse to pay unemployment benefits until the compensation has been used up.

Even a victim of the NSU nail bomb attack in Cologne, who was in Ms John's care, had to struggle with the authorities. The authorities demanded that the victim, half of whose

²⁶John fordert mehr Hilfe für Angehörige der NSU-Opfer, Die Welt of 22nd February 2012.

upper body had been ravaged by the blast according to John, be admitted for psychological treatment even though his psyche was fine. Regardless, the payments would be immediately stopped in accordance with the German Act on Victims' Compensation if he discontinued his psychological treatment.

Of course Ms John also sharply criticised the work of the police. It is important that the investigative committee takes a look at the work of the police, with a particular view to whether the methodology meets the requirements in a country of immigration. Anyone who has been involved with the police in any way knows that there is an esprit de corps there. According to the ombudswoman this is a reason why misunderstandings are not publicised. For this reason she has proposed setting up an independent clearing office, to which victims of xenophobic attitudes on the part of the police could turn.

Ms John's recommendations are based on the consensus reports from the bereaved families about their experiences with the police. The families felt harassed by the police straight after the terrorist acts regardless of their relationship to the victims. The officials' investigation was only directed at alien crime. At the same time several relatives told the investigators that right-wing radicals could be involved. However, this approach was openly ignored. Instead the police shattered the social environment of the relatives with their work. The damage resulting from this approach endures to this day.

Many people shunned the bereaved believing that there must be some truth in the police accusations. Some families even started to believe that some of their own relative had had something to do with the murders. At times the police confronted the relatives with fictitious claims just to test their reaction. This is why Ms John encouraged the committee to question a relative about the police work. The ombudswoman also presented a suggestion for improving investigative work: in future all acts of crime, the victims of which have a migrant background, should be regarded from a xenophobic perspective from the very start.

Christina Büttner was able to report from the mobile victim support unit in Ezra, Thuringia that it is not easy for persons with migrant backgrounds to report being a victim of a criminal act. According to her a man of African ethnicity, who was threatened in a bank branch by several delinquents and subsequently robbed of his bicycle which was parked in front of the branch, was unable to press charges at the local police station. The man had to hire a lawyer in order to do so.

At the same time, victims often experience that the police are not particularly motivated to pursue right-wing crimes when they know that the victims are against neo-Nazis and attend anti-Nazi rallies and demonstrations. The police convey the feeling that the victims are themselves to blame. According to Büttner racism is not only found in extreme right-wing philosophy, but also amongst the authorities. It is a situation, which a free society cannot tolerate.

The committees investigating the NSU, which both the federal and state governments have meanwhile established, can make an important contribution to combating institutional racism.. The effectiveness of their work however depends on members of parliament having immediate access to the necessary files. With the resolution and clarification of the issues at hand politicians can prove how interested they are in resolving the grievances and injustices. According to Ms John the victims expect the investigative committee to identify and hold to account those who were responsible for investigating in the wrong direction for so many years. However, even Barbara John doubts that this will be the case. Today, one year after the information on the NSU was released to the public Ms John's initial scepticism does not look unjustified.

3. Islamophobia in Germany

For years the KRM (CRM) member associations have tried to draw public attention to the increase in Islamophobia in Germany. Numerous studies and surveys over recent years have confirmed that voices hostile to Muslims are growing louder and consequently the risk of anti-Muslim criminal offences increases. Although attacks on mosques and other anti-Muslim criminal offences continually increase, these criminal offences are always attributed to “hate crimes” and therefore fall under “criminal offences with xenophobic motives”. DIE LINKE has already revealed this deficit with their inquiry to the executive section of German parliament long before the NSU scandal became known.²⁷

The responses to this inquiry and a renewed inquiry²⁸ submitted to parliament by DIE LINKE revealed that the definition of politically motivated crime does not include a category “Islamophobia” or “Anti-Muslim”. Up until now both were subsumed under “hate crimes”. According to details published by the Federal Ministry of the Interior there have been more than 30,000 “politically motivated criminal offences” in 2011. 3.3%- or 1,010 were categorised as “crimes committed by aliens”. More than half (16,873) are attributed to “right-wing extremists”. Federal Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich is concerned, that in particular crimes with “xenophobic motives” have increased.²⁹

In addition, extreme right-wing criminality is characterised by an “inherent brutality”, with a significantly higher rate of injured persons in comparison to the actual number of criminal offences. “Up to now 60 deaths from extreme right-wing violence have been recorded since 1990 with respect to the murders of the NSU and the previous results

²⁷Muslimfeindliche Straftaten in Deutschland, printed matter 17/4335 of 22/ 12/ 2010.

²⁸Angriffe auf Moscheen in Deutschland, printed matter 17/9523 of 07/05/2012.

²⁹Massouda Khan: „Moscheen im Brennpunkt?“, in: Islamische Zeitung, 30/05/2012.

from the continual assessment of older cases for any right-wing extremist background”, Mr Friedrich stated to representatives of the media.

According to information of the KRM (CRM) a mosque or other Muslim institution in Germany has been targeted every two and half weeks since 2001. In many cases the sentiments of the suspected perpetrators are obvious – hate graffiti, pigs’ heads or anti-Muslim symbols. Unfortunately this trend continues to this day.

Due to the slim chances of finding the perpetrators of such crimes it is safe to assume that there are an essentially larger estimated number of unknown cases of attacks against Muslims. Islamophobia cannot simply be subsumed under ‘xenophobia’ or ‘hate crimes’ but must be evaluated as an individual form of racist violence. Since this was not the case until now there is the distortion and error that there were no anti-Muslim criminal offences until now.

The increase in violence against mosques is highly disturbing for the Muslim communities. As stated by DITIB to the press on 16th May 2012 the number of offences against mosques has increased substantially. According to the press release “Also the aggressive quality and lack of restraint in the offences is increasing at an alarming rate: the growing amount of hate mail is now accompanied by placing pigs heads in front of mosques, smearing of right-wing slogans and swastikas on mosque walls, Molotov cocktail bombings as well as dangerous cases of arson”.³⁰

Muslims are taken back by the handling of these cases by the public and politicians. On the one hand media rarely report on the offenses. Public sympathy is limited. The reaction of the security authorities also irritate many Muslims: “It is regrettable that the security authorities remain quiet about such offences towards the public on the grounds

³⁰DITIB press release of 16.05.2012: Übergriffe auf Moscheen nehmen zu. <http://ditib.de/detail1.php?id=301&lang=de>

that they want to avoid inspiring copycats. In this way a spiral of silence starts, which make the affected communities all the more victims: the members of the Muslim religious communities are not only shocked by the acts but their need for security following the acts has greatly increased.³¹

The president of the DITIB Federal Association Hamburg and DITIB North, as well as executive board member of the DITIB umbrella association Dr Zekeriya Altuğ, who made a public statement about the attacks in Hamburg-Hamm as a result of a fire on New Year's Eve and recently about the attack in Ahrensburg also says: "When those affected, when whole communities are condemned to silence, we create a chilling and fearful climate. We must not forget that silence means consent! Therefore we advise the affected to make public any and all such offences and to avoid giving this impression. We encourage all religious communities and mosques to publicise offences. This is the only way we can inspire public condemnation and increase public consciousness of the needs of the affected communities."

³¹ibidem

3.1 “German Conditions” - Heitmeyer

The study “Deutsche Zustände” (“German Conditions”) published by the Institute for Interdisciplinary Research on Conflict and Violence at Bielefeld University compiled surveys and research over a 10 year period under the direction of Professor Wilhelm Heitmeyer. It repeatedly points to an increase in xenophobia and group-related defamation in Germany as well as to growing tendencies to extreme right-wing and nationalistic attitudes. This study makes one thing clear: these tendencies are not exclusive to radical minorities but also grow from the middle of society.³²

“Over the last years this has been condensed into the rejection of immigrants but above all into the rejection of Islam and Muslims. The murder of German Muslims by NSU gangs has demonstrated that extreme right and Islamophobic movements have found a joint target here and that the once prevailing anti-Semitism amongst extreme right-wing groups has dissolved. These developments can be discerned throughout Europe as the institute has elicited in other research projects.”³³

In the study Professor Heitmeyer refers to an “insecure decade”. According to sociologists group-related defamation, which not only manifests itself through the denigration and discrimination of Muslims, immigrants or handicapped persons but also of the unemployed, women or homosexuals, creates fertile ground for the use of violence by right-wing extremists. These elements are not operating on the edge of society, but feel legitimated and fuelled up by degrading views and attitudes amongst the general populace.

³²Florian Rötzer, Die Gesellschaft ist vergiftet, in: telepolis of 11/12/2011.

³³ibidem

Xenophobia and extreme right-wing populism have increased in Germany over the 10 year study period according to Wilhelm Heitmeyer. “Approximately ten percent of Germans think extreme right-wing through and through”, sums up the result of the latest survey on *Spiegel Online*. Between 2010 and 2011 the justification of violence as well as the readiness to use violence amongst extreme right-wing populists has increased by 16 percent. Distrust and hostility towards Muslims have grown particularly strong. Half the Germans will not move into areas where many Muslims live. “The increasing gulf undermines social cohesion. Society is poisoned”, according to Heitmeyer.

In terms of xenophobia and Islamophobia the study states the following:³⁴

a) **Again on the rise: racism and the denigration of homeless persons** have, after a slight downward trend, increased significantly amongst the Germans from 2010 to 2011. This increasing trend continues since 2009 in the **denigration of the long term unemployed**. Likewise an increasing trend can be currently observed with respect to xenophobia and the **denigration of handicapped persons**. The level here is still lower than in the first survey of prejudice in 2002 or 2005. The view that “when jobs are scarce, foreigners living in Germany should be sent home” has increased over this year by five percentage points to 29.3. More than half (52.7 percent) of those questioned in 2011 think “most of the long term unemployed are not really interested in finding a job”. In 2011 only 35.4 percent agree with this statement: Homeless beggars should be removed from the pedestrianized areas “and agree with the unequal treatment and the exclusion of homeless people from public space”.

³⁴Heitmeyer, Deutsche Zustände – Das unsichere Jahrzehnt, Presseinformation zur Präsentation der Langzeituntersuchung *Gruppenbezogene Menschenfeindlichkeit*, 12/12/2011.

b) **Relatively unchanging:** The emphasis on **established special rights** has again decreased significantly this year after a dramatic rise from 2009 to 2010 and is currently at a lower level compared to the first survey date. Also Islamophobia has significantly decreased after a significant increase from 2009 to 2010. In 2011 30.2 percent sometimes feel like a foreigner in their own country "...due to the high number of Muslims". In 2010 this was still 38.9 percent. The view that "newcomers in a country should be happier with less" is currently shared by 54 percent of the persons questioned, while in 2010 64.7 percent still held this view.³⁵

³⁵Deutsche Zustände: Das entsicherte Jahrzehnt, by Heitmeyer (IKG).

3.2 The Germans and their migrants

– results from the European Identity Study

- Schmidt-Denter

How open are Germans with respect to their fellow foreign citizens? A study by the former “Lehrstuhl für Entwicklungs- und Erziehungspsychologie” (Department of Developmental and Education Psychology) at Cologne University compiled over ten years under the direction of Prof Dr Ulrich Schmidt-Denter has compared views of two generations of Germans with ten European neighbouring countries. Over 6,000 subject groups with and without an immigrant background were questioned about their xenophilous and xenophobic attitudes.

The study reveals that German youths and their parents occupy an unremarkable middle position within the European rankings with respect to the form of xenophobia (xenophobia) and anti-Semitism. However, on the other hand the Germans are outspokenly xenophilous. When asked about xenophilous values (xenophilia) the Germans occupy an undisputed top position in comparison with the rest of Europe. Nowhere else in Europe are xenophile statements as accepted as in Germany. However, at the same time Germans are very self-critical. The negative view of themselves is even described as “typically German”, according to the empirical criteria of the study. For instance, the statement „Foreigners have many positive characteristics which we German lack” finds increasing approval in comparison with other European neighbours.

The question of the effectiveness of preventive measures, of the “remembrance culture” or the “coming to terms with the past” is often posed in the media in the light of xenophobic criminal offences. The study shows that education which induces feelings of guilt and shame and a deconstruction of social and national ties does not only have a negative effect on Germans. The continual cultivation of a negative German self-image disturbs immigrants who are willing to integrate. Measures, which bring Germans and immigrants together, in turn strengthen community feeling. Researchers could already prove this in a study of the World Cup 2006. They assume that social cohesion

is encouraged not only through happy but also sad events (for example in the consensus against violence, extremism and terrorism). However, it remains questionable whether the frequent demonstrative appearance of Turkish politicians encourages the development of a “we feeling” between Germans and their immigrants or whether any representatives of a foreign power instead increase feelings of mutual alienation.³⁶

³⁶Schmidt-Denter, U. (2011). Die Deutschen und ihre Migranten – Ergebnisse der europäischen Identitätsstudie. Weinheim: Beltz/Juventa.

3.3 Sinus Milieu study “Discrimination in Every Day Life” (2008)

The Sinus Milieu study “Discrimination in Every Day Life”³⁷ commissioned by the Federal Anti-Discrimination Office reveals the urgent need for action in creating a society free from discrimination and prejudice especially with respect to Muslims.

The study quickly narrows down the debate with parties discriminated against with respect to religion and world view to religious subjects and Islam and its negative image. The following pattern shows the typical chain of association:

Religion > Islam > Fundamentalism > Terror

In other words the keyword “religion” immediately suggests “Islam”. This is spontaneously connected with religious “fundamentalism”, which in turn suggests violence and “terror” as learnt from the relevant media reports. The variant of confining to the upper and middle milieu of the leading social segments:

Religion > Islam > backward > subordination of the woman > arranged marriage and honour killing

The variant in the underclass milieu, who often discern the connections concretely and therefore personally:

Religion > Muslims > Turks > Foreigners > Threat

The association chain is not much different in the traditional segment:

Religion > Muslims > Intolerance > Hatemongers > Infiltration/destruction of our culture

³⁷Sinus-Milieustudie „Diskriminierung im Alltag, Wahrnehmung von Diskriminierung und Antidiskriminierungspolitik in unserer Gesellschaft“ (2009) published by the Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes (ADS) (Federal Anti-Discrimination Office)

Currently there are alternative thought and association models in the younger generation:

Religion > uncool > Islam >

Middle aged > uncontemporary > enlightenment needed

Fanatics, weirdoes > unappealing > distancing

Statements on the subject of religion are also worrying. 39 % believe that Muslims are intolerant and violent and only 55 % find it unacceptable if Muslims are the first suspects after a terrorist attack. Less than half those questioned support the equality of non-Christian religious communities (e.g. Jews or Muslims with the Christian churches). 41% call for the repeal of the headscarf ban and approximately every third person wants to know more about foreign religions and denominations. “Religious zeal is no longer compatible with the current age.” agreed 79% of those questioned and 59% are of the view that religions have not earned any state protection since religions discriminate against people from another religion.

In several social segments discrimination is thought understandable if not justified for adherents to foreign religions – Muslims (“I would discriminate against Muslims, they suck!”). At the same time the discrimination of people in Germany based on their religion is disputed (“I don’t know anyone who...”; “religious freedom prevails in Germany”).

Such contradictions in the study are only explicable through huge anxiety at the growing number of Muslims in a country becoming “overrun”, “infiltrated” or “biased”. Above all in the “conservative” and “traditionally rooted” social segments it is assumed that Islam is not “peaceful”, but wants to violently force its “backward” ideas, standards and commandments on the natives („something is going on”, “some plan is being concocted”, “we will wake up when it is too late”). Corresponding conspiracy scenarios are occasionally turn up in other social segments (e. g. “the discrimination of women in our country was introduced by Muslims”).

In particular female interviewees often speak of “the suffering of Muslim women” in connection with the subject of religion, oscillating between sympathy and outrage (“I really feel sorry for the Turkish women who are beaten, forced into marriage marry and

have to wear headscarves”; “my Turkish friend who gets beaten by her parents– that is really too much!“).

The pre-modern misogynistic, violent and macho lifestyles ascribed to devotees of Islam are heavily criticised and often leading to drastic counter measures which are either covertly or openly sympathised with (“we live here in Germany where you can’t do exactly as you please”; “they must be forced to follow our rules”). Regardless of the threat felt through Islam, publically visible religious commitment is rejected and it is more closely associated with “fundamentalism” and “fanaticism”. Due to these results there is “still a need for information” according to the director of the federal government’s Anti-Discrimination Office, Martina Köppen, especially with a view to religious minorities.

3.4 Study of the Turkish migrant state of mind after the NSU murders

The Centre for Migration and Political Research at Hacettepe University Ankara conducted a public study with SEK-POL/Data 4U, a public opinion research institute based in Berlin, which was aimed at presenting the sentiments, opinions and perceptions of Turkish migrants about the racist violence carried out by the neo-Nazi movement since 2000³⁸. The research entitled “Racist Neo-Nazi Murder in Germany: A Study of the Sentiments and Perceptions of the Turkish” was carried out by telephone amongst 1,058 Turkish migrants living in Germany. Selected persons over the age of 14 were questioned over the period from 5/12-15/12/2011.

In the study it was initially attempted to find out how interested German Turks are in the topic “Racist Neo-Nazi Murders in Germany“ and how they informed themselves about this subject. It revealed that 87% of the Turkish migrants followed the events very closely and their sources are primarily Turkish media.

The Turkish migrants living in Germany have shown great serenity and maturity in comprehending the murders committed by neo-Nazis despite popular statements. They do not connect these events with German society and consequently avoid accusing Germans.

³⁸Study: „Rassistische Neonazi-Morde in Deutschland: Eine Studie zur Gefühlslage und Meinungen der türkischen Migranten“ – Data 4U, Hacettepe Universität in January 2012

The majority of Turkish migrants (78%) do not implicate the whole of German society with the murders rather cite a radical grouping. Only approximately 2% of those questioned are of the view that “the murders were committed by German society” and only approximately 7% believe that “a large segment of German society” is responsible for the murders.

The Turkish migrants have largely lost confidence in the German state. . Fifty-five percent of those surveyed gave a positive response to the question if in their opinion the German government encouraged or even protected the murderers. Only approximately 21% did not share this belief. Turkish migrants distrust towards the German government primarily stems from the fact that the perpetrators of the murder series carried out since 2000 were not arrested and information about dealings between neo-Nazis and some employees at the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. This has significantly increased distrust towards the German government.

Over two thirds (67%) of the Turkish migrants fear additional racist motivated murders in Germany and nearly 40% greatly fear that they themselves or friends and relatives could become victims of the neo-Nazi terror.

Despite this concern the overwhelming general reaction amongst Turkish migrants to the series of murders is not “fear” (8%) or “rage” (12%), but “sadness” (74%).

Nearly 60% of the Turkish migrants believe that the German politicians would rather cover up the events and brush them under the carpet.

Only 35% of the Turkish immigrants surveyed believe that German politicians are concerned and are trying to find a solution.

Only approximately a third of the Turkish migrants regard the “apology” from the Bundestag as a sign of remorse and true sorrow from the German authorities. By contrast nearly 60% do not agree with the statement “Germans are saddened by the events and are truly mourning.”

4. Position of the KRM (CRM)

Murder, bank robberies and violence: Germany in a state of shock after the actions of a handful of right-wing terrorists. The police are only slowly publishing further investigative results on the details of the crimes. As of yet not all the evidence has been included in a logical reconstruction of the events leading up to 2007.

In the meantime an intensive debate about the relationship between the government and right-wing extremism has started. The extreme right-wing scene in Germany is partly infiltrated by a network of government-funded and paid confidential informers. For years the struggle against Muslim terrorists took precedence over a social debate with right-wing extremists. At the same time criticism against the methods and political views of the constitution agencies was diminishing. With exaggerations and understatement these agencies contribute to the political mood in the country.

For instance the term “Islamism” has put thousands of respectable Muslims, loyal to the country, in the same boat with criminals and thereby suggests to the public that there is an imminent threat to the state and society. Right-wing “Islam critics” used the situation to mobilise civil circles against Islam and against Muslims.

For many years law abiding Muslims and their mosque communities have been branded with the label „Islamism“, have been subject to surveillance and have in the end been excluded from the public debate and from social participation in Germany. It took a visit by the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu, who undoubtedly made the most important contribution of the year to the debate about Islam in Germany. During his last stay Davutoğlu clearly contradicted the German Interior Minister Friedrich. Davutoğlu rejected Friedrich’s use of the term “Islamic terror“. He did not want to speak with anyone who held onto this term. As it is inappropriate to speak of “Christian terror” or of “German terror” it is equally inappropriate to speak of “Islamic terror”. In the eyes of the KRM (CRM) The wording used by Federal Interior Minister Friedrich as well as the term “Islamism” offends Muslims and puts them under unjustifiable general suspicion.

“When terms such as terror and Islam (...) are mixed up, it comes as no surprise when people automatically associate ‘terror’ with ‘Islam’ as already established in 2009 by the Sinus social study ‘Discrimination in Everyday Life’“, states a press release of the Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs (IGMG). In the light of extreme right-wing terror it should be obvious how far this can go.

Individual “scaremongers” pursue strategies, which collectively associate Muslims with criminal offences and criminal ideologies. Despite the tense situation it is not necessary to generate further distrust between the government and Muslims. In a modern country such as Germany each citizen, whether Muslim or not, relies on a functioning police organisation.

Therefore polemical criticism of the police work is not helpful either. Instead it is essential to investigate and remedy the criminological failures. It should not be ruled out that a network of confidential informants and some members of the intelligence services held a “protective hand” over the crimes.

On the other hand the idea that the government deliberately conspired against citizens of Turkish ethnicity is nonsense. However, the criticism of insensitive dealings between the government and Muslim citizens, who appear on the “list” of terror groups, is justified. It must be recognised that these Muslims are in real danger, a fact which previously did not seem to be of interest neither to the police nor the media. To fob potential victims off with a standard letter from the authorities is a scandal within a scandal and damages the image of the Federal Republic of Germany.

List of demands

The German authorities are obliged to re-establish the trust of its citizens and in particular its Muslim citizens in the intelligence services, which was lost as a result of the NSU acts of terrorism. Without this trust it is not possible to feel safe and at home in Germany. This trust can be re-established if

1. the circumstances of the NSU crime are completely reconstructed above all the clarification of
 - a. all criminal offences committed by the NSU itself and their entourage
 - b. the destruction of evidence,
 - c. all previously known and unknown errors, glitches and failures of all officials in the course of pursuing or ignoring leads in connection with NSU terrorism.
2. all direct, cross and third party personnel connections from security service circles and politics to the NSU sphere are determined,
3. all information to the wider public on conclusion of these investigations are disclosed,
4. all responsible civil servants and politicians accept the personal consequences of their failure in connection with these investigations,
5. all those responsible are held accountable in connection with these investigations,
6. the government demonstrably conducts a denazification process within their agencies and office aimed at removing civil servants who socialize with extreme right-wing circles,
7. the Federal Minister of the Interior makes it plausible to what extent the recently re-occupied positions in the Federal Constitution Agency and the Federal Criminal Police were filled by officials who are so-called "Islamism" experts and that these officials are fit to combat right-wing extremism,

8. the competent authorities re-evaluate previously unexplained violence against individuals, buildings and institutions in the light of knowledge from the NSU scandal,
9. eliminate terms such as “Islamism” and or “Islamist” from the security discussion in favor of words, which are better suited and do to not place Islam and Muslims under general suspicion,
10. politicians, in particular, distance themselves from statements, which are suited to placing Islam and Muslims under general suspicion and defame or denigrate Muslims, not to inspire the increasing Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiments but work against it
11. make Islamophobia a main theme of the German Islamic Conference and Security Partnership,
12. record Islamophobic and anti-Muslim criminal offences under its own heading in crime statistics and no longer as “politically motivated criminality” in order to comprehend and estimate the extent and the development of this phenomenon,
13. the government actively includes the KRM (CRM) as partner in the course of fulfilling these demands,
14. the government annually commemorates the victims of the NSU beyond the national memorial ceremony in order to counter forgetting,
15. the NSU terrorism is taught in school history lessons as an after-effect of the Nazi regime of the 1930s and 1940s.

Appendix 1:

Chronicle of the NSU Terror

1996: The „Thüringer Heimatschutz“ (Thuringia Homeland Protection or THS) is founded. One of the activists was employed by the Office for the Protection of the Constitution as a confidential informant. He sold information from the scene to the state. Next to Brandt Uwe the NSU trio as well later NPD functionaries were also active at the THS.

1998: In Jena (Thuringia) police excavated a bomb lab belonging to the NSU terrorists. The trio were able to flee due to “police errors”.

1999: Unknown perpetrators commit a series of at least 14 bank robberies in several East German federal states. Later the crimes were associated with the NSU.

July 2000: Ten immigrants from Eastern Europe were injured during an assault in Düsseldorf. An unborn child is killed. The perpetrators remain unknown. The case has been reopened due to revelations in context with the NSU.

September 2000: The Turkish florist Enver Şimşek is shot dead in Nuremberg.

January 2001: A 19 year old German-Iranian girl is seriously injured during an attack on her parents' grocery store in Cologne.

June 2001: The factory worker and tailor Abdurrahim Özüdoğru is shot dead in Nuremberg.

June 2001: The fruit and vegetable grocer Süleyman Taşköprü is shot dead in Hamburg.

August 2001: Habil Kılıç is shot dead in Munich.

February 2004: The snack bar owner Mehmet Turgut is shot dead in Rostock.

June 2004: A nail bomb explodes in Cologne and injures 22 people, nearly all the injured are of Turkish ethnicity.

June 2005: snack bar owner İsmail Yaşar is shot dead in Nuremberg.

June 2005: The locksmith Theodoros Boulgarides is shot dead in Munich.

April 2006: The kiosk owner Mehmet Kubaşık is shot dead in Dortmund.

April 2006: The internet café owner Halit Yozgat is shot dead in Kassel.

April 2007: A 22 year old police woman is shot dead in Heilbronn. Her colleague survives but is seriously injured.

November 2011: A snack bar owner is shot in Döbeln near Leipzig. The perpetrator is able to flee.

November 4th, 2011: After a bank robbery in Eisenach (Thuringia) Uwe Böhnhardt and Uwe Mundlos are found dead in a burnt out camper van in a suburb of Eisenach. Allegedly Uwe Mundlos first shot his accomplice, set the camper van on fire, then shot himself. In Zwickau (Sachsen) the flat, in which both suspected bank robbers lived with Beate Zschäpe, is set on fire and completely destroyed.

November 15th, 2011: It becomes known that an employee of the Hessian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution was at the scene during the murder in Kassel. The man now works for a district government in Hessen.

November 18th, 2011: Federal and state governments decide to set up a central database for investigating perpetrators of extreme right-wing violence. Apart from that an „Extreme Right-wing Defence Centre” should be founded. An NPD ban is also being discussed again.

December 3rd, 2011: It is revealed that the NSU may have also started a series of fires in Saarland. According to media reports between September 3rd, 2006 and September 3rd, 2011 houses inhabited by citizens of Italian, Africans and Turks ethnicity were set on fire in Völklingen. At least 20 people were injured amongst them children in the eleven fires.

December 15th, 2011: The federal states jointly agree a swift ban of the NPD.

December 18th, 2011: According to media reports the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution sabotaged individual police manhunts after the disappearance of the neo-Nazi trio from Thuringia in February 1998.

December 31st, 2011: According to media reports the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution was frequently on the right track with the NSU, but remained inactive.

January 26th, 2012: All parliamentary factions agree to setting up an investigative committee to look into the NSU terrorism.

January 18th, 2012: The federal government decides to set up a new database with information gathered on right-wing extremists. Information from the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, police and military counter intelligence will be collected there.

January 26th, 2012: Thuringia decides to set up an investigative committee on NSU terrorism.

January 30th, 2012: First NSU victims receive between € 5,000 and € 10,000 in compensation payments.

February 8th, 2012: A federal/state commission should explain the neo-Nazi murders and shed light on the role of the constitution agencies. Opposition criticizes the committee as superfluous.

February 12th, 2012: The head of the Federal Crime Police, Mr Ziercke, rejects the accusation that his authorities destroyed evidence against the extreme right-wing terrorists of the NSU during investigations.

February 23rd, 2012: Funeral service for the NSU victims in Berlin. The Chancellor, Angela Merkel, asks “for forgiveness” from relatives of the victims.

March 7th, 2012: An NSU investigative committee is created with the votes of the Social Democrats, the Green Party and DIE LINKE. CDU, FDP and NPD abstain.

May 15th, 2012: Gerhard Schäfer presents his report about the work of the intelligence services in Thuringia. Later it is disclosed that the Schäfer commission did not all files.

May 24th, 2012: The former Bavarian Interior Minister Günther Beckstein rejects

criticism of the parliamentary investigative committee. He could not recognise any failures on the part of the intelligence services.

May 25th, 2012: The Federal Supreme Court issues an arrest warrant against a suspected NSU supporter.

May 29th, 2012: The federal prosecutor arranges the release of two additional suspected supporters of the NSU neo-Nazi cell.

June 14th, 2012: The Federal Supreme Court issues another arrest warrant.

June 28th, 2012: The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution destroyed files during the investigations into the NSU terrorism after which the neo-Nazi trio fled.

July 2nd, 2012: The president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution Heinz Fromm prematurely resigns from office.

July 5th, 2012: Interior Minister Hans-Peter Friedrich says on German public television, he assumes the constitution agencies did not recruited confidential informers from the NSU.

July 7th, 2012: The president of the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution Thomas Sippel resigns from office in the context of the neo-Nazi terror cell affair.

July 9th, 2012: The president of the Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution Helmut Roewer rejects the suspicion that the intelligence service warned confidential informants about police raids. Later it is known that police passed on information to neo-Nazis.

July 11th, 2012: The president of the Saxon State Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Reinhard Boos, steps down.

July 14th, 2012: According to media reports the Saxon State Office for the Protection of the Constitution supposedly destroyed files about the NSU terrorist cell, which the authorities dispute.

July 15th, 2012: Twenty files possibly connected with the NSU emerge in Thuringia

eight months after the exposure of the NSU.

July 18th, 2012: In future the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution wants to concentrate on the combating “Islamist motivated terror”.

July 19th, 2012: It is known that the Federal Interior Minister ordered the destruction of Office for the Protection of the Constitution files on the subject of right-wing extremism 10 days after the exposure of the NSU.

August 27th, 2012: Former president of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Heinz Fromm, cannot explain to the NSU investigative committee of the Bundestag how seven files on confidential informers in the extreme right-wing scene could be destroyed shortly after the revelation of the neo-Nazi murder series.

August 28th, 2012: Federal and state interior ministers discuss the reform of the domestic intelligence service.

September 11th, 2012: It is established that military counterintelligence interrogated the later NSU terrorist Uwe Mundlos in March 1995, as he was attracted to right-wing extremist activities during his military service. The defence ministry knew of the existence of these files, but did but not inform the parliamentary investigative committee.

September 13th, 2012: In Saxony-Anhalt the president of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution, Volker Limburg, steps down.

September 13th, 2012: It becomes known that a suspected NSU helper worked as a confidential informant for the Berlin State Office of Criminal Investigation for more than ten years.

September 18th, 2012: Berlins Senator of the Interior, Frank Henkel, admits to failings in conducting NSU investigations before the select committee of the Berlin House of Representatives.

September 19th, 2012: Minister of the Interior, Hans-Peter Friedrich, puts the new neo-Nazi cross-agency database into service. The opposition claims that this database would not have prevented the NSU murders.

September 20th, 2012: Media reports that the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution also paid a confidential informer.

September 21st, 2012: In the meantime the fourth NSU investigative committee commences work in Bavaria.

September 24th, 2012: A plaque is dedicated to the memory of NSU victim Mehmet Kubaşık victim in Dortmund.

September 28th, 2012: Hessen's Minister President, Volker Bouffier, testifies before the NSU parliamentary investigative committee and denies any misconduct on his part. He is accused of having obstructed the investigations into the Kassel murder case.

October 1st, 2012: The Halitplatz is dedicated in memory of Halit Yozgat in Kassel.

October 8th, 2012: The Thuringian State Office for the Protection of the Constitution delivers around 780 files with the names of confidential informants to the NSU parliamentary investigative committee which is heavily criticised. The protection of confidential informants continues.

October 10th, 2012: According to media reports charges in connection with the NSU case should be made at the end of the year. The proceedings will commence in March 2013.

October 15th, 2012: The singer of a neo-Nazi band is given a suspended sentence and fine. He celebrated the murder in a song "Döner-Killers".

October 17th, 2012: According to an investigative report an employee of the State Office for the Protection of the Constitution in Baden Württemberg supposedly revealed intelligence secrets to a head of the German branch of the Ku-Klux-Klan (KKK).

October 18th, 2012: Ex constitution agency employee Fritsche rigorously disputes errors before the Federal Investigative Committee.

Appendix 2: Reaction of the KRM (CRM) to the NSU murder series

Press release of 15/11/2011

The Koordinationsrat der Muslime in Deutschland (KRM) (Coordination Council of Muslims in Germany or CRM) calls for a solution to and a fight against extreme right-wing terrorism

The Coordination Council of Muslims calls on politicians and the judiciary to no longer downplay right-wing radical racism and its terrorist outgrowths but to decisively combat such developments to prevent others from falling victim to acts of terror based on ethnicity or religious persuasion. The KRM (CRM) carefully and conscientiously monitors the current alarming findings with respect to extreme right-wing terrorism and its networks in Germany.

The fact that right-wing radical terrorists can move through Germany unhindered and at the same time execute people in cold blood, carry out terrorist attacks and operate a terrorist cell undetected by the intelligence authorities has caused fear and insecurity to this day. It is alarming that the federal and district intelligence authorities did not previously recognise these dreadful crimes and murders as racist and terrorist acts. The KRM (CRM) fears that right-wing radical, violent extremists were encouraged to commit these acts and could be encouraged even more through these successive errors of judgement.

The refusal to address the subject of increasing violent right-wing radicalism within the scope of the German Islamic Conference (DIK) is incomprehensible in this context despite the increasing radicalisation of the right-wing milieu and an increasing number of attacks on migrants and mosques during the period of establishing Muslim religious communities.

“There is a big feeling of insecurity, likewise the need for an explanation. Across Germany there are unexplained attacks on immigrants and also on places of worship which should now be discussed. Under these circumstances the mood oscillates between

stunned, unsettled and fearful. The information process must give a clear signal to the radicalised, violent milieu that they will be severely punished by the forces of the law and the safety of all citizens, the migrants in these actual cases, takes priority.” says Bekir Alboğa, KRM (CRM) spokesperson.

Therefore the KRM (CRM) calls on politicians and the judiciary to no longer play down the right-wing radical network, its outgrowths and racism and to take the necessary measures to end the murders and the attacks on homes and mosques.

Press release of 23/11/2011

Open letter to the German government and German public. Right-wing radical views are a threat to peaceful coexistence in our society and threaten our democracy.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

The unbridled and unnoticed activities of violent right-wing radicals, who were in the underground and in the background of our society, with their numerous victims have shocked us all. In addition to the embarrassing failures of the intelligence services this course of these events will go down as a deeply incisive and painful scandal in German history. The radical right-wing terror has considerably shaken the confidence of citizens in government institutions. The government should protect its citizens and prevent the vitriolic murder of innocent people of different ethnicity and creed. These crimes are particularly devastating when one considers the possible entanglement of the intelligence services and protection of the perpetrators. Both victims and their families were deeply hurt and spurned as investigators linked murder victims to criminal intrigues during their investigations and ruled out extreme right-wing motives. An earlier involvement of security forces would have prevented oversights and these murders.

We convey our sincere condolences to all affected families of victims. They should realise we support them and will strive for a thorough clarification of these terrible crimes.

As Muslims in Germany we live in day-to-day fear, depression, anxiety and insecurity. That there is a death list with the names of thousands of Muslims and Turks as well as institutions is cause for great concern. The impotence caused by not knowing for certain whether your own name or organisation is on that list further fuels anxiety.

The wounds of Mölln and Solingen have reopened in the court room by the murders of Marwa Sherbini, by increasing arson attacks on mosques and homes of migrants and lastly through this incomprehensible series of cold blooded Nazi murders.

We want to know what is feeding this right-wing radical extremism and terrorism in our country.

It has been ignored for too long. Right-wing extremism was able to develop unhindered in the shadow of an imaginary Islamic threat. The German National Integration Plan and the German Islam Conference which were established in good faith and aimed at improving coexistence could not unfortunately change the distorted picture of Muslims since this process was largely dominated by the security debate.

The false policy of integration, the problematisation of subjects to do with Turks and Muslims, focussing on arranged marriage, the headscarf ban or the Islamification of Germany as well as the intensification of family reunion with Turkish citizens dominating public debates led to the stigmatization of Islam and Muslims by a large segment of the German people.

There was also much one sided reporting in the media which focused more on the problems of integration rather than the successes contributing to a negative picture of the Turks and Islam in general.

At the same time right-wing radical thinking, threats, hate and sedition against migrants and Muslims and Islam is spread on anti-Muslim internet forums without hindrance under the guise of freedom of speech. People who stand for democracy, equal rights and opportunities for minorities to participate are hatefully defamed and discredited by some as “do-gooders” although the striving for good should guide us all in our dealings.“

Racism and right-wing extremism could thrive in this currently fertile soil and radical arsonists could find a justification for their ideologies. Over the last years right-wing extremism has reached a level of seriousness which many did not think possible. A terrorist network of vast dimensions, involvement and support has been created and may even infiltrate the security apparatus. Not only does this threaten Muslims and migrants but also our democracy.

As Coordination Council of Muslims we have always drawn the attention of politics and society to the dangers of right-wing extremism and all too often our efforts have fallen on deaf ears. As Muslims and representatives of civil organisations we see an acute need action which must go far beyond merely explaining this series of murders. The ethnic

and religious diversity in our country is enriching and must be protected. People of different skin colour, different religion and lifestyle etc. belong to this diversity.

It is time to normalise diversity.

Therefore we appeal to the federal government and to all citizens:

1. To promote this diversity. This has always been necessary for the progress and reputation of our country, while creating a culture of recognition.
2. Decisively combat extensive right-wing extremist ideas in the middle of society through effective measures e.g. informing and educating our citizens.
3. Bring all responsible persons to justice within the government institutions who have breached their obligation to monitor radical right-wing terrorists whether through the interception of evidence, through deception, covering up or sloppiness.
4. Locate all supporters of terrorists and backers and put them before the courts as well as reopening cases of unexplained attacks on persons, houses (e.g. Ludwigshafen), mosques, graveyards in the light of new evidence.
5. Oppose the spreading of right-wing radical ideas in schools, public institutions, offices and authorities and dismiss persons with such sympathies from office.
6. Decisively oppose the discrimination of Muslims and people from an immigrant background in everyday life, work life and at the authorities.
7. Prioritise the combating of Islamophobia and right-wing extremism in the context of Islam and Muslims as well as placing it on the agenda of the German Islamic Conference and create a security partnership while developing preventative measures to protect Muslims and their institutions.
8. the recording of Islamophobic and anti-Muslim criminal offences by the security authorities under its own heading and no longer as “politically motivated criminality”.

The following representatives and organisations make this appeal as initial signatories. Additional signatories will be made available via the different communication paths (www.koordinationsrat.de).

Initial signatories:

Names or organisations

1. Koordinationsrat der Muslime (KRM) (Coordination Council of Muslims)
2. DITIB Türkisch Islamische Union der Anstalt für Religion e.V.
3. VIKZ Verband der Islamischen Kulturzentren (Association of Islamic Cultural

Centres)

4. ZMD Zentralrat der Muslime in Deutschland (Central Council of Muslims in Germany)
5. Islamrat für die Bundesrepublik Deutschland (Islamic Council for the Federal Republic of Germany)
6. Verein unabhängiger Industrieller und Unternehmer e.V.
7. Deutschsprachiger Muslimkreis e.V.
8. Türk UNID Türkischer Studentenverein Köln
9. AIB Europäischer Arbeitgeber und Akademiker Verband in NRW
10. NITAB Niederrhein türkischer Akademiker Bund
11. Türkischer Caferiten Union in Europa
12. Köln Malatyalilar Verein
13. UETD Union Europäisch Türkischer Demokraten (Union of European Turkish Democrats)
14. IGMG Islamische Gemeinschaft Milli Görüs
15. Köln Galatasaraylilar 1997 e.V.
16. Islamische Religionsgemeinschaft Hessen
17. ATIAD Verband türkischer Unternehmer und Industrieller in Europa e.V. (Association of Turkish Industrialists and entrepreneurs in Europe)
18. AAIB Alevitisch-islamische- Union-Deutschland e.V.
19. Zentralrat der Marrokaner in Deutschland
20. Islamische Gemeinschaft Jama'at-un Nur Deutschland
21. Zentrum für Türkeistudien und Integrationsforschung (Centre for Turkish Studies and Integration Research)
22. ABTTF Föderation der West-Thrakien Türken in Europa
23. BTEU Bund Türkisch Europäischer Unternehmer
24. ABAF Avrupa. Ehli-Beyt. Alevi. Federasyonu.
25. TGB Türkische Gemeinde zu Berlin e.V. (Turkish Community in Berlin)
26. Sineb El Masrar, Magazin Gazelle
27. TD-Plattform e.V.
28. IGBD Islamische Gemeinschaft der Bosniaken e.V.

Press release of 15/01/2012

The Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) in Germany welcomes the establishment of an investigative committee to investigate the series of neo-Nazi terrorist violence.

Many questions still remain unanswered after the exposure of the cold blooded series of neo-Nazi attacks. People and politicians are justified in asking how right-wing radical terrorists could disappear into the underground in Germany and murder innocent people.

A representative study of the Centre for Migration and Political Research at the Hacettepe-University in Ankara shows that the confidence of people with a migrant background, in particular Turkish people, towards the German government has been drastically shaken creating a feeling of distrust towards the security authorities. "Turkish people regard Germany as a symbol for order, organisation and efficient security forces. Therefore many of those questioned cannot fathom how these murders went unexplained for over ten years" the finding states. In particular the relatives of the victims are losing their faith in the German constitutional state through the hesitant and slow progress of the investigation.

"We welcome the establishment of an investigative committee. This sends an important signal to the relatives and society that the Bundestag wants to explain the background to the failure of the investigation. ", states Bekir Alboğa, spokesperson of the KRM (CRM). Alboğa emphasises that the protection of its citizens and the consequent explanation of terrorist murders makes up the essence of the constitutional state. In particular the responses from Muslim faith communities gave cause for concern, for a revaluation of the number of attacks and defamation of mosques and their communities in the wake of these developments. The high point was reached in the last two years when more criminal offences were committed than in the previous 2 decades showing the increased readiness of the right-wing scene to use violence and its criminalisation.

„We hope the committee will deliver contemporary results and that trust will be re-established not only with respect to the security needs of migrants and Muslims. “, concludes Alboğa.

Press release of 23/02/2012

The Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) remembers the victims of the neo-Nazi killing spree during the central commemoration in Berlin

Cologne, Thursday 23/02/2012 – Today the victims of the neo-Nazi killing spree are remembered.

This commemoration is being held for the victims of the extreme right-wing neo-Nazi terrorist group the NSU. Over ten years the NSU was able to systematically murder people in Germany from an immigrant background without being detected. Bekir Alboğa, spokesperson of the Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) in Germany, finds it incomprehensible that in modern Germany people are killed for neo-Nazi and radical right-wing motives and everyday 3, annually in total 900 neo-Nazi crimes and attacks are carried out on immigrants, Muslims and their institutions.

Therefore today we commemorate those who will enter the collective consciousness as victims of these crimes: Enver Şimşek, Abdurrahim Özdoğru, Süleyman Taşköprü, Habil Kılıç, Mehmet Turgut, İsmail Yaşar, Mehmet Kubaşık, Halit Yozgat, Theodoros Bulgarides and Michele Kiesewetter.

As KRM (CRM) we want to again offer our heartfelt condolences to all the relatives of the victims.

Bekir Alboğa, spokesperson of the KRM (CRM), summarises the events as follows: “The unbridled and unnoticed activities of violent right-wing radicals, who were in the underground and in the background of our society, with their numerous victims has shocked us all. In addition to the embarrassing failures of the intelligence services this course of these events will go down as a deeply incisive and painful scandal in German history. The radical right-wing terror has considerably shaken the confidence of citizens in government institutions. The government should protect its citizens and prevent the vitriolic murder of innocent people of different ethnicity and creed. These crimes are particularly devastating when one considers the possible entanglement of the intelli-

gence services and protection of the perpetrators. Both victims and their families were deeply hurt and spurned as investigators linked murder victims to criminal intrigues during their investigations and ruled out extreme right-wing motives. An earlier involvement of security forces would have prevented oversights and these murders.”

The Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) composed an open letter in connection with this to the German government and the German public on November 23rd, 2011 which was signed and supported by many Islamic religious organisations and many other migrant organisations.

“As Koordinationsrat der Muslime (Coordination Council of Muslims) we have always highlighted the dangers of right-wing extremism to politicians and society but all too often this has fallen on deaf ears. As Muslims and representatives of civil organisations we see an acute need for action which must go far beyond purely explaining the killing spree” Bekir Alboğa says.

After Mölln and Solingen a memorial will be set up for the victims of the neo-Nazi terrorist group and it is hoped that this will be the last time to remember victims of right-wing radicalism. The fact that such crimes still happen is proof that measures to banish neo-Nazi ideas from society for good are basically unsuccessful.

“The setting up of an investigative committee of the Bundesrat and today's central commemoration serves as a clear signal of all German society against racism and xenophobia. However, it is not sufficient to permanently prevent radical right-wing crimes. The breeding ground of right-wing extremism must be eliminated through a culture of recognition to further protect our country and our democratic constitutional state.” Mr Alboğa explains.

“We hope that the newly appointed Federal President stands for the cohesion and growing together of our society in its diversity. He should value the promotion of citizen's rights and those of migrants and Muslims, and within this context the free practicing of the Muslim religion. The ethical and religious diversity in our country is an asset and must be protected. Islam is a part of that asset“, Bekir Alboğa concludes.

Press release of 28/05/2012

We will not and cannot forget. Do not look away and do not be silent!

Together with the Genc family, the people of Solingen and all of Germany we, in our communities, remember the victims of the perfidious, malicious and tragic arson attack. We mourn and remember the five Turkish girls and women whose lives were taken away from them on May 29th, 1993. This dreadful experience represents a tragic highpoint of extreme right-wing violence in the 1990s and has seared itself into the collective consciousness of German society and its immigrants.

The attack in Solingen was committed in a social climate, in which foreigners were increasingly perceived as a danger to the country. Fears were stirred; racist resentments were made politically and socially acceptable with terms such as “foreign domination” and “national emergency” together with the reckless notion that “the boat is full”. In this climate of cold-heartedness and fear directed against “foreigners and asylum seekers” the right-wing extremists felt empowered and developed a sinister type of activism, which proved devastating for further social developments.

Defaming acts of hatred and violence have no place at a time when efforts for universal human rights and freedom of individuals and societies as a whole take on greater significance. Nevertheless there are efforts for the continual containment of radical right-wing and misanthropic ideas on the one hand and a proportionally large and enduring problem on the other.

Guidance, empowerment and information about an enduring constructive anthropology for the whole of society which also includes the alleged “foreigners” as a natural, equal and valuable part of the society is urgently required through social institutions and actors.

Of course there are favourable connections between far reaching social structures and processes, stigmatising discussions and negative social political embedding on the one hand and the acts of violence and hate of the right-wing extremists against marginalised sections of society on the other.

In addition Prof Ali Dere, president of the DITIB umbrella association says: “This inhumane act showed us the destructive power of such violence in the personal, family and social realms. This act, the attack in Solingen, reminds us how negatively the interaction of social, political and media discussions can influence coexistence; and how the spreading and agitation of extreme right-wing ideas is tolerated and made possible through this, even acceptable at court. We want to overcome our shock and helplessness precisely through this understanding of current developments, while encouraging the commentary on and sharing of grievances with the public.

A broad social discussion about such acts is urgently required since social coexistence can only succeed when ethical values are placed and lived out at the forefront of our society. Values of mutual acceptance, of bringing awareness to each other and social empathy are equal to religious and democratic values which can only become more meaningful through by learning from history.

I invite politicians, society and the media to move towards an emphasis on humanity and charity, empathy and integrity, balance and fairness towards the socially weak, disadvantaged and excluded. Since each society, each community is only as strong as its weakest, this is how we should always measure ourselves.

We should not only remind ourselves and remember the senseless deaths of the five Genc family members. We want to include the victims of the Solingen arson attack in our prayers and wish the family strength and God’s support.”

Board

DITIB Umbrella Association

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