

Permanent Secretary of State for Immigration and Integration



Ministry of Immigration and Integration

Dear Mr Ruete,

Thank you for your letter of 22 December 2017 in which you request additional information and clarifications on the Danish notification of 11 October 2017 on carrying out internal border controls beyond 11 November 2017.

As stated in my letter of 10 November 2017, the Danish Government's decision to carry out internal border controls was based on an assessment by the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (DSIS) of the security situation in Denmark pertaining to international terrorism. Following hereto, the competent authorities found that in the current circumstances temporarily reintroducing border controls would be an effective response to the identified threats to the internal security and that alternative measures such as e.g. intensified police checks in the border areas would not achieve the same effect.

The threat assessments made by the Center for Terror Analysis (CTA) within the DSIS are continuous and most often classified. CTA, however, issues an official, unclassified assessment of the terror threat to Denmark, the most recent issued on 12 January 2018 as a replacement for the one issued on 7 February 2017. This assessment under preparation in 2017 formed the basis of the mentioned analysis from the DSIS.

In it, it is, inter alia, assessed

- that the terror threat to Denmark is significant. The threat is primarily posed by militant Islamism.
- that the military pressure on the group that calls itself the Islamic State (IS) increases the pressure on Foreign Fighters in Syria and Iraq, including on persons from Denmark. This has resulted in more people wanting to return to Europe, including Denmark.
- that individuals who have been with militant Islamist groups like IS have gained a capability to commit acts of terrorism and can be particularly radicalised, brutalised and prone to violence upon their return. This is especially true of men, but also applies to women.
- that even a few returnees may pose a terror threat to Denmark. It may also increase the threat to Danish interests abroad if such individuals travel to other countries.

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Asyl og Visum
Slotsholmsgade 10
DK-1216 Copenhagen K
Denmark

Phone +45 6198 4000
Email uim@uim.dk
Website www.uim.dk

CVR no. 36977191

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- that returnees to other European countries may also pose a threat to Denmark.
- that the ongoing militant Islamist propaganda, the possibility of more foreign fighters returning and the lack of areas to which militant Islamists can travel, have increased the pressure from terrorism on Europe. The number of completed attacks in the West by militant Islamists was higher in 2017 than in 2016. Attacks are primarily aimed at civilian targets and security authorities.
- that attacks in Europe are overwhelmingly committed by lone individuals who have not been to a conflict zone. The attack in Barcelona in August 2017 showed that there is also capability in Europe to establish attack cells that can operate without being detected by the authorities.
- that in some attacks in Europe, the planning was done in another country. Attacks that are planned in one country but executed in another can be particularly difficult to prevent.
- that since the autumn of 2015, a number of persons who entered with the flow of refugees have been involved in attacks, including rejected asylum seekers. The threat to Denmark may also emanate from refugees and migrants in countries other than Denmark.

The choice of border sections subject to internal border controls is based on continuous risk assessments by the Danish Police. The number of persons who have been checked by the police or the number of persons who have been refused entry is not, in itself, related to this decision. However, the numbers are not insignificant. Since the beginning of 2016, more than 6,400,000 persons have been checked and more than 5,150 persons (as of 14 January 2018) have been refused entry to Denmark as a result of the temporary internal border controls.

In my letter of 10 November 2017, I informed you about a case, where the border controls prevented potential terrorists from getting to Denmark. I can now inform you that a 30-year-old Syrian male is currently in remand custody until 12 February 2018 for planning a terrorist act in Copenhagen as a supposed accomplice in the case mentioned.

Whether it will be necessary to extend the border controls to other sections of the internal borders will be based on assessments of the security threat and operational recommendations by Danish Police authorities. In this regard, the choice of frequency, location and time of the selected spot checks is made to ensure minimum obstacles to the free movement of persons and goods while at the same time being proportionate to the present terror threat and internal security.

The implementation of the measures also fully respects fundamental rights.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Uffe Toudal Pedersen'.

Uffe Toudal Pedersen
Permanent Secretary of State for Immigration and Integration