

# MOROCCO: Towards a new approach of violent extremism after the murder of two Scandinavian women?

– HRWF (06.01.2019) – In the aftermath of the brutal murder of two young Scandinavian women in the Atlas mountains a few weeks ago, several journalists and intellectuals in Morocco have questioned the efficiency of Rabat's anti-extremist policy. On 25 December 2018, Morocco World News published an interesting article of Youssef El Kaidi, a PhD candidate at the University of Sidi Mohammed Ben Abdelah Fez, entitled "Terrorism in Morocco, a drastic approach needed now" (<https://bit.ly/2Vzw8wg>). See hereafter large excerpts of his paper (the titles in the text are those of HRWF).

"Morocco has invested significant efforts in both the security and religious fields in order to build its reputation as a peaceful, welcoming, and tolerant country in the otherwise turbulent region of North Africa and the Middle East. Those efforts were consistent and serious, leading ultimately to very positive effects worldwide.(...)

## ***About the murder of the two Scandinavian women in the Atlas and the prevention of violent religious extremism***

The proactive measures taken by Morocco's intelligence and security services have made the country impenetrable ever since the inception of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, or so it seemed. Does this crime indicate that Morocco has finally been penetrated? Is this terrorist act an indication

of more terrorist activity taking place in our country in the coming days? Were the security and religious approaches implemented by the government to fight religious extremism really enough? What measures can be taken next to spare the country from other harsh incidents?

The above questions are pressing and should be thoroughly contemplated and addressed before any strategic move in the fight against religious extremism is made in the future. The religious and security approaches that Morocco has relied upon so far were very instrumental and should not be underestimated or belittled.

The strategic national policy initiated by King Mohammed VI in the aftermath of the 2003 Casablanca attacks to monitor and manage the religious field through the control of mosques, the training of moderate religious scholars and preachers, and the control of *fatwas* by appointing the Supreme Scientific Council were all very successful. Moroccan intelligence and security services have also managed, since 2002, to dismantle more than 183 terrorist cells across the country, according to the Central Bureau of Judiciary Investigations ([BCIJ](#)).

The recent murder of two Scandinavian tourists, however, has raised concerns about Morocco's counterterrorism approach, which had previously inspired many countries at the regional and international levels. The dismantling of dozens of terrorist cells every year should have been seen as an indicator of the strong existence of the terrorist ideology in Morocco. The successful and decisive intervention of Morocco's intelligence services before those terrorist cells could translate their ideology into brutality and bloodshed does not change the fact that the mechanisms by which that ideology works and spreads are still operating.

Therefore, terrorists and religious extremists could even be around us anywhere on any day, in private and public places, waiting for the right time and the right place to put their

radical beliefs into action. The claim made by one of the arrested suspects in a video declaring his allegiance to ISIS prior to the murder of the Scandinavian tourists should be taken seriously. He said, addressing the leader of ISIS, Abu-Bakar Al-Baghdadi: "You should know that only God knows of the exact number of the followers you have in Morocco." How can we track down and prevent those followers? What about those who firmly hold the ideology but do not belong to organized terrorist cells?

### ***Fighting against the roots of violent religious extremism***

We need to understand that religious extremism is an ideology and the fight against it should be at the intellectual and educational levels first and foremost. Morocco, despite the efforts that have been made, was remarkably lenient with the discourses of hate, intolerance, and bigotry which surface in schools, the media, and public spaces.

We have repeatedly seen videos circulating on social media by prominent Wahhabi leaders in Morocco demonizing and threatening intellectuals such as Ahmed Assid, Rachid Aylal, and others by accusing them of heresy. Somehow, those people were never arrested or tried (\*). Perhaps the pressures by Islamic forces (Islamic parties, Islamic groups, conservative civil society, etc.) in the country put the state in a difficult and complicated position. Those conservative forces have always fiercely objected to reforms interpreting them as secular and anti-Islam, starting from the *Modawana* (family code) in 2003 to the Islamic education school curriculum reform in 2018.

The recent terrorist attack near the tranquil and peaceful village of Imlil in the High Atlas Mountains awakens us to the bitter truth that terrorism is a constantly looming threat for Morocco. Thus, a more drastic and comprehensive approach should be implemented with zero tolerance to bigots, extremists, and the advocates of hate and terror in the name

of religion.

Morocco should address the conditions conducive to the emergence and spread of terrorism by fighting poverty and social disparity in the country. Moreover, strengthening the educational system and building students' cultural awareness, promoting the culture of peace and coexistence through educational programs and curricula, ensuring humans rights and the rule of law, and promoting the universal values of peace, justice, co-existence, integrity, love, and cross-cultural dialogue would be a few steps in the right direction.

May the souls of Louisa Vesterager Jespersen and Maren Ueland rest in peace, and may peace, love, and prosperity prevail in the world."

(\*) HRWF comments

A few days ago, Sheikh Kettani, an Islamist preacher, heavily criticized Moroccan channel 2M for airing on New Year's Eve a comedy show allegedly degrading Qadi Ayyad, an Islamist scholar in the 11th and 12th century. He also called on Ulama council's scholars and intellectuals to condemn and raise voices against this act. Sheikh Kettani was a former political prisoner. In September 2003, he was sentenced to 20 years in prison for alleged connections to the Casablanca bombings in 2003. Eight years later, Kettani was granted a royal pardon due to efforts of his lawyer, Mustapha Ramid, who also obtained the pardon of other Islamists along with promises to renounce violence and extremism. In 2012, Ramid became Morocco's Minister of Justice as a member of the Party of Development and Justice (PJD) advocating Islamism. The PJD is the main party in the government with almost 1/3 of the seats in the parliament.

In 2017, another *controversial cleric*, Sheikh [Abdellah Annahari](#), stirred up controversy once again on social media by claiming that celebrating New Year's Eve was "undoubtedly

*Haram.*” In a video shared on his Facebook account, the Salafist preacher declared that celebrating the New Year would be an “unforgivable sin” and that all New Year’s commercial activities should be strictly prohibited. “Whoever celebrates the New Year is no different from Christians and their religion of debauchery,” Annahari said. “Buying or selling the fir tree is Haram, taking a picture next to Santa Claus is Haram, partying is Haram and even sending New Year wishes is Haram,” he shouted while violently stumping his cane. Annahari also claimed that celebrating any non-Muslim festivity will lead to imitation of the “infidels’ creeds”. The Oujda-based cleric, who is well known for his provocative statements, went as far as describing as “zebras” Moroccans who exchange hugs during their celebrations. (More about Annahari on Morocco World News: <https://bit.ly/2Re40W6>– <https://bit.ly/2VswULL>)

The Islamist ideology is alive and well in politics and society in Morocco.

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## **Denmark deports Said Mansour, deprived of citizenship, to Morocco**

– By [Susanna Spurgeon](#)

– Morocco World News (05.01.2019) – Denmark has deported Said Mansour, convicted of incitement to terrorism and formerly a dual Moroccan-[Danish](#) citizen, to Morocco.

According to [Danish media](#), Mansour arrived in Casablanca yesterday night, aboard Royal Air Maroc flight 222 from Copenhagen. Danish authorities handed him into Moroccan

custody.

Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen tweeted that he was “very satisfied” with Mansour’s deportation: “Said Mansour has been handed over to the Moroccan authorities. A final end to a pertinent effort to carry out the Danish Supreme Court’s ruling to deport him in 2016... It sends a clear message that criminal foreigners, who so obviously act against the Danish values and promote terrorism, do not belong in Denmark.”

Rasmussen had talked to Moroccan Minister of Foreign Affairs Nasser Bourita in December about Mansour’s deportation, according to Danish news outlet Horsens Folkeblad.

### ***‘Justice has been served’***

Danish immigration minister Inger Stojberg was in Morocco this week on a secret trip to make a deal with Morocco on the deportation.

In a statement today, Stojberg said, “Justice has been served.” Mansour, she said, was “one of the most fanatic Islamists who we have deported... He was on the very top of our list.”

In an unprecedented 2015 ruling, a Danish court [stripped Said Mansour](#) of his Danish citizenship. The court had convicted Mansour of incitement to terrorism for Facebook posts praising Osama bin Laden and encouraging followers to join the al-Nusra Front, an al-Qaeda affiliate in Syria, according to [Al Jazeera](#).

The court sentenced Mansour to four years in prison. Mansour appealed the loss of his citizenship, arguing he would face torture in Morocco.

The Danish Supreme Court in 2016 ruled against Mansour, and the Danish government has since been trying to deport him.

Stojberg today asserted the deportation deal “is completely in

order concerning the obligations we have to abide by the international human rights of Said Mansour.” The remarks imply Denmark received promises from Morocco that Mansour would not be physically harmed, tortured, or executed.

On December 17, 2018, Danish tourist Louisa Vesterager Jespersen was found murdered with a Norwegian tourist near Imlil, in Morocco’s Atlas Mountains. Morocco has arrested 23 suspects in the case and connected it to terrorism.

The Imlil murders may have expedited Denmark’s efforts to deport Said Mansour.

Mansour was the first Danish citizen to lose his citizenship and be deported.

In 2007, Mansour received a separate terror conviction and spent 3.5 years in prison in Denmark.

Born in Morocco, Mansour has lived in Denmark since 1983, earning citizenship in 1988. He has four children with a Danish ex-wife and grandchildren living in Denmark.

Morocco does not have an extradition agreement with Denmark. According to a Norwegian source, many Norwegian and Danish criminals come to Morocco to avoid extradition.

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## **Countering extremism in Indonesia and beyond**

Religious Freedom Institute (<https://bit.ly/2KP2a10>) – Between May 8 and May 14, 2018 Indonesia was hit by a wave of ISIS terrorist attacks, including bombings carried out by families—fathers, mothers, and children together. The

principal targets were churches and police stations, including the headquarters of the paramilitary Police Mobile Brigade (which is also where Ahok, the former Governor of Jakarta and a Christian, is serving a sentence for blasphemy). In the wave of attacks, thirteen terrorists and fourteen others were killed, and more than 40 were injured.

The Indonesian government's security forces responded strongly. There were some early arrests and then, on May 31, in a series of raids, anti-terrorist squads arrested 41 terror suspects and killed 4 others. These raids came less than a week after the May 25 passage of a new anti-terrorism law that criminalized overseas terror attacks and allowed for longer detention of suspects. The bill had been languishing in parliament for two years amid controversies over how strict it should be and how to define terrorism, but this the wave of deadly suicide attacks persuaded lawmakers the bill should be passed.

But a much more low-key event may signal broader changes in how Indonesia is approaching its effort to combat extremism.

On May 31, Indonesian President Joko Widodo appointed Kyai Haji Yahya Cholil Staquf (Pak Yahya) as a member of the Presidential Advisory Council. Pak Yahya is from one of Indonesia's most distinguished Muslim families, is the Secretary-General of the Supreme Council of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), the world's largest Muslim organization, and is the head of Gerkan Pemuda Ansor (ANSOR), NU's young-adult wing, which has some 5 million members. He is also among the Muslim world's most incisive and outspoken reformers.

NU has long been engaged in ideological combat with Islamist extremism. In May 2017, Ansor called together more than 300 international religious scholars to consider the "obsolete tenets of classical Islamic law" that call for "perpetual conflict with those who do not embrace or submit to Islam." This gathering issued the Ansor "Declaration on Humanitarian

Islam,” that built on the May 16, 2016, NU-hosted International Summit of Moderate Islamic Leaders (ISOMIL).

The “Declaration on Humanitarian Islam,” is far more self-critical than declarations that have come from the Middle East. It argues that there are elements within classical Islam that are problematic and need to be changed. At the press conference announcing the Declaration, Ansor Chairman Yaqut Qoumas stated “It is false and counterproductive to claim that the actions of al-Qaeda, ISIS, Boko Haram and other such groups have nothing to do with Islam, or merely represent a perversion of Islamic teachings. They are, in fact, outgrowths of Wahhabism and other fundamentalist streams of Sunni Islam.”

Pak Yahya reemphasized these themes and expressed them in an even more radical fashion in a July 18, 2017, address to the Council of the European Union Terrorism Working Party, many of whose members would have accused the speaker of Islamophobia if he had been anyone else. He stressed:

“Western politicians should stop pretending that extremism and terrorism have nothing to do with Islam. There is a clear relationship between fundamentalism, terrorism, and the basic assumptions of Islamic orthodoxy. So long as we lack consensus regarding this matter, we cannot gain victory over fundamentalist violence within Islam.”

“Within the classical tradition, the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims is assumed to be one of segregation and enmity.”

“Why, no matter how many [terrorists] we kill or put in jail, new recruits are always coming to join them? Here is the fact: the problem lies within Islam itself. Jihadist doctrine, goals and strategy can be readily traced to specific elements of orthodox, authoritative Islam and its historic practice, including those portions of fiqh-classical Islamic law or shari‘ah-that enjoin Islamic supremacy.”

While NU as a whole has not endorsed the “Declaration on Humanitarian Islam,” Pak Yahya told me they are discussing it and he has suffered little criticism for his statements. The arguments that he and Ansor are making are radical, and crucial in the battle with extremism. And they are gaining increasing attention in Indonesia and around the world.

On May 17, 2018, Pak Yahya met with Vice President Pence for the second time. And the fact that Indonesian President Jokowi has now appointed him to his Advisory Council sends a strong signal about Jokowi’s own attitudes.

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## **RUSSIA: 16 Jehovah’s Witnesses behind bars as of 8 June**

HRWF (08.06.2018) – The number of Jehovah’s Witnesses deprived of their freedom has been dramatically and rapidly increasing in Russia since the ban of their religion in April 2017.

It can unfortunately be expected that the situation will worsen day after day and that young Jehovah’s Witnesses will also be targeted for their conscientious objection to military service, as members of a banned extremist religious organization (!).

Here is an updated list of 16 prisoners as of 8 June 2018. Their pre-trial detention is systematically prolonged until their trial starts.

See below the region they are from, followed by the name of the detainee and birthdate, the date of the arrest, the article of the criminal code and the dates of their pre-trial detention.

### ***Charges***

Criminal Code Article 282.2, Part 1: Organisation of the activity of a social or religious association or other organisation in relation to which a court has adopted a decision legally in force on liquidation or ban on the activity in connection with the carrying out of extremist activity.

Criminal Code Article 282.2, Part 2: Participation in the activity of a social or religious association or other organisation in relation to which a court has adopted a decision legally in force on liquidation or ban on the activity in connection with the carrying out of extremist activity.

### ***List of Prisoners***

#### **Oryol Region Oryol**

Dennis CHRISTENSEN (18-Dec-72)

25-May-17

Article 282.2(1)

Pre-trial detention: 26-May-18 / 1-Aug-18

#### **Republic of Tatarstan Naberezhniye Chelny**

Ilkham Shamilevich Karimov (9-Feb-81)

27-Mar-18

Article 282.2(1)

Pre-trial detention: 29-May-18/ 25-Jul-18

Vladimir Nikolayevich Myakushin (6-Nov-87)

27-Mar-18

Article 282.2(1), (1.1) and (2)

Pre-trial detention: 29-May-18/ 25-Jul-18

Konstantin Matrashov (1983)

27-Mar-18

Article 282.2(1), (1.1) and (2)

Pre-trial detention: 29-May-18/ 25-Jul-18

Aydar Maratovich Yulmetyev (Aug-93)

27-Mar-18

Article 282.2(1), (1.1) and (2)

Pre-trial detention: 31-May-18/ 25-Jul-18

### **Republic of Bashkortostan Ufa**

Anatoliy Sergeyevich Vilitovich (15-Sep-86)

10-Apr-18

Article 282.2(2)

Pre-trial detention: 12-Apr-18/ 2-Jul-18

### **Murmansk Region Polyarny**

Roman Nikolayevich Markin (18-Mar-74)

18-Apr-18

Article 282.2(1)

Pre-trial detention: 23-Apr-18/ 11-Jun-18

Viktor Fedorovich Trofimov (26-Mar-57)

18-Apr-18

Article 282.2(1)

Pre-trial detention: 23-Apr-18/ 12-Jun-18

### **Vladivostok Region Vladivostok**

Valentin Pavlovich Osadchuk (15-Mar-78)

19-Apr-18

Article 282.2(2)

Pre-trial detention: 23-Apr-18/ 20-Jun-18

### **Orenburg Region Orenburg**

Aleksandr Gennadyevich Suvorov (20-Apr-80)  
16-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 19-May-18/ 14-Jul-18

Vladimir Yuryevich Kochnev (15-Oct-79)  
16-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 19-May-18/ 14-Jul-18

### **Magadan Region Magadan**

Konstantin Nikolayevich Petrov (9-Aug-86)  
30-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 01-Jun-18/ 29-Jul-18

Ivan Grigoryevich Puyda (C.O.)(5-Nov-78)  
30-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 01-Jun-18 30/-Jul-18

Yevgeniy Anatolyevich Zyablov (9-Mar-77)  
30-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 01-Jun-18/ 29-Jul-18

Sergey Liviyevich Yerkin (23-Jun-53)  
30-May-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention: 01-Jun-18/ 29-Jul-18

### **Tomsk Region Tomsk**

Sergey Gennadyevich Klimov (C.O.) (26-Mar-70)  
3-Jun-18  
Article 282.2(1)  
Pre-trial detention 05-Jun-18 04-Aug-18

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# **RUSSIA: Open Letter from 10 of the wives of 16 imprisoned Jehovah's Witnesses to President Putin's adviser Mikhail Fedotov**

HRWF (08.06.2018) – On 7 June, ten of the wives of the 16 imprisoned JW's in Russia sent an open letter (Russian version: <https://jw-russia.org/news/18060718-345.html>) plea to Mikhail Fedotov—advisor to President Putin and chairman of the Presidential Council for Civil Society and Human Rights.

Human Rights Without Frontiers has a pdf of the full list of names of JW's with open criminal cases against them, as a result of the home arrests that began in April. In addition to the prisoners, dozens of believers in 11 regions are under house arrest and/or are not permitted to leave the region.

## **Text of the Open Letter in English**

***To the Russian Federation Presidential Council  
For the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights***

Honorable Mr. Fedotov! Honorable members of the Human Rights Council!

This open letter to you is a cry of desperation. People who are very dear to us, our husbands, those who feed us, the fathers of our children, peaceable, honest people, who are always ready to help others, are being thrown behind bars for

being suspected of reading Bible commandments and praying together with us and our children to the God whose name, as recorded in the Bible, is Jehovah.

As of this day in Russia already 17 individuals are being held in pre-trial detention. One of our fellow believers has been in custody for over a year. Dozens more believers, in 11 regions of Russia, are under house arrest or are forbidden to leave their cities of residence. With each passing day, their number is increasing. Taking into account that in Russia there are 175,000 professing the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses, we wonder how many more dozens, hundreds or thousands of victims of conscience will it take before the unjust criminal persecution of people for their faith in God is brought to an end.

Under the guise of fighting extremism, many of us, and even our children, have been threatened with weapons by agents of the special forces and ordered to lie face down. Our homes have been raided and searched, our telephones and computers have been seized, so we can't work or live a normal life. Our family photographs, our passports and other personal documents, and Bibles have been confiscated. They are trying to force us to live in fear and shake every time there's a knock at the door or the sound of a siren on the street, as we await arrest merely for our faith. Some believers have already been dismissed from their places of work after many years of faultless work just because the organization of Jehovah's Witnesses is banned in Russia. We cannot find the answers to the questions of why we are being subjected to such harassment in our country, and which religion will be the next to fall victim after us?

The law-enforcement agencies that are persecuting our husbands for their faith in God explain that it is because of the April 20, 2017, decision of the Russian Federation Supreme Court to liquidate all legal entities of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia.

However, both the Russian Federation Ministry of Justice, during the hearing at the Supreme Court, and the Russian Federation Government, after the decision was handed down, officially stated that the court's decision would not result in any violations of the rights of citizens to freedom of worship.

The aforementioned decision of the Supreme Court did not ban the religion of Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia. It only involved legal entities. So why are the law-enforcement agents acting in contravention of the will of the government of our country? Who in our country benefits from the mass repression of religious believers? Why are our relatives being accused of a serious crime with the prospect of imprisonment from 6 to 10 years for fictitious extremist activity (Article 282.2 of the RF Criminal Code)? Why are the law-enforcement agents mistakenly interpreting peaceful expression of faith on God for participation in an extremist organization?

Honorable members of the Council, please help us to receive answers to these questions.

In the face of such monstrous circumstances, we are afraid for our children's future. The ground has been laid for children to be torn away from parents, whose faith in God has been declared "wrong." News that information on children whose parents are Jehovah's Witnesses is being gathered in educational and medical facilities is very worrying. It is not surprising that virtually every week whole families of our fellow believers are abandoning everything and fleeing abroad to seek political asylum for the protection of their children.

In return for freedom and a quiet life, we are being invited to disown our faith. This is not just a figure of speech—investigators have directly invited us to sign documents in order to avoid punishment for "extremism." If not, in their words, no attorney will be able to save us. But we cannot stop believing in God. It is a right that every

individual has from birth. The Russian Federation is a multi-confessional state, and we, as citizens of Russia, have the right to expect that our rights will be respected by the state. We are not asking for any special privileges. We are asking for just one thing—please, defend our rights.

Honorable members of the Council! A campaign of terror has been unleashed against an entire religion, one of the largest Christian religions in Russia. Fundamental human rights are being trampled on: the right to freedom of worship and personal inviolability, the right to personal dignity, the right to privacy, the right to the inviolability of the home, to freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, freedom of worship, the right to private property.

If the Russian government does not quickly put an end to this growing campaign of terror, the administration will be faced with a nation-wide human rights catastrophe. We are certain that you have the power to take action now! We ask that you please pass this information on to the President of the Russian Federation, and use all possible legal means to restore the rights of religious believers.

With respect, the wives of men who are being held in custody:

Alyona Vilitkevich (Republic of Bashkortostan)

Anna Zyablova (Magadan Region)

Yulia Klimova (Tomsk Region)

Galina Kochneva (Orenburg Region)

Irina Christensen (Oryol Region)

Svetlana Markina (Murmansk Region)

Tatyana Petrova (Magadan Region)

Anastasia Puyda (Khabarovsk Territory)

Natalia Suvorova (Orenburg Region)

Trofimova Ulyana (Murmansk Region)

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# France expels controversial Salafist preacher to Algeria

France24 (19.04.2018) – <https://bit.ly/2F7IvpU> – Controversial Salafist preacher, Imam El Hadi Doudi, who was based in the southern French city of Marseille, was expelled to Algeria Friday morning following a lengthy legal process, according to a French media report.

The 63-year-old preacher – who was born in Algeria and does not have French citizenship – was expelled on Friday, the AFP reported quoting an unnamed French interior ministry source.

The expulsion followed a deportation order issued by the French interior ministry on Tuesday.

But Doudi's expulsion application was suspended pending a ruling by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), which finally ruled in favour of the deportation on Thursday.

The ruling followed an appeal by the Salafist cleric's lawyer, Nabil Boudi, who argued that his client would be tortured or suffer "inhuman or degrading treatment" if he was returned to Algeria.

The court granted the French government 72 hours "to gather the additional information necessary to make an informed decision". Doudi was held in an administrative detention center pending the court's final ruling.

## ***Sermons targeting women, Jews, Shiites***

The imam of the as-Sounna mosque, in the heart of Marseille, was one of the most high profile cases in the French government's effort to combat radicalisation.

The new de-radicalisation plan announced by French President Emmanuel Macron's government includes increased surveillance of Muslim clerics accused of hate speech and incitement to violence.

The as-Sounna mosque was closed in December following allegations that Doudi was provoking discrimination, hatred and violence toward an individual or group.

A confidential government investigative report, seen by the New York Times, cited numerous sermons by Doudi, where he preached that Jews are "unclean, the brothers of monkeys and pigs". Women, the preacher stressed, could not leave their homes without authorisation, and an apostate "needs to be eliminated by the death penalty to protect Muslims".

In its expulsion application, the French Interior Ministry cited the radical imam's "deliberate incitement to discrimination, hatred or violence against a particular person or group of persons", notably women, Jews, Shiites and people committing adultery.

### ***Radical clerics under scrutiny***

Following a spate of deadly terrorist incidents since the 2015 Charlie Hebdo attacks, France has tightened its anti-terror laws while attempting to tackle the spread of Islamist extremism particularly in French prisons, schools, mosques and Islamic centres.

Between 2012 and 2015, the French Interior Ministry expelled 40 Muslim clerics while another 52 people – including clerics – were expelled over the past 28 months, according to the New York Times.

In 2017, 20 radicalised foreign nationals were expelled from French territory, according to French Interior Minister Gérard Collomb.

Last month, France expelled Mohammed Tlaghi, a substitute imam at a mosque in Torcy, an eastern Parisian suburb, due to radical sermons, under an expulsion order issued on March 2.

The as-Sounna mosque, where Doudi preached, has been closed since December 11, 2017, when the Marseille police department issued a six-month closure order, which was ratified by France's top administrative court earlier this year.

(FRANCE 24 with AFP)