

Table of Contents

- [**Denmark to tighten border controls after Quran burnings**](#)

Denmark to tighten border controls after Quran burnings

Border controls will initially be in place until August 10 as a means to prevent further protests from far-right groups.

[Aljazeera](#) (04.08.2023) - Danish police are tightening border controls following recent [burnings of the Quran](#) that have affected the security situation, the justice ministry has said, following a similar decision by Sweden earlier in the week.

"Authorities have today concluded that it is necessary at this time to increase the focus on who is entering Denmark, in order to respond to the specific and current threats," the Danish ministry said in a statement late on Thursday.

Tighter border controls will initially be in place until August 10, it said.

Far-right activists in Denmark and Sweden have burned and damaged several copies of the Muslim holy book in recent months, inciting [outrage in the Muslim world](#) and demands that governments ban such acts.

"The burnings are deeply offensive and reckless acts committed by few individuals. These few individuals do not represent the values the Danish society is built on," Foreign Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen said in a statement last week.

He added that whatever measure was taken "must of course be done within the framework of the constitutionally protected freedom of expression and in a manner that does not change the fact that freedom of expression in Denmark has very broad scope".

'Lawful but still awful'

The decision to tighten border controls with more checks of travellers arriving in Denmark follows a similar move by Sweden.

Both governments have condemned the burnings and said they are considering new laws that could stop them. But domestic critics say any such decisions would undermine freedom of speech that is protected in their constitutions.

"Everything that is legal is not appropriate. It can be lawful but still awful," Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said on Tuesday in reference to legislation in Sweden, which does not have a law specifically prohibiting the burning or desecration of the Quran or other religious texts.

Kristersson said tightening border controls was meant to prevent "people with very weak connections to Sweden" from coming to the country "to commit crimes or to act in conflict with Swedish security interests".

The public burnings in front of the Iraqi, Egyptian and Turkish embassies in the Scandinavian countries have sparked widespread outrage across Muslim countries, with Saudi Arabia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, Iran, Morocco, Qatar and Yemen lodging protests in response.

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) last month approved a resolution on religious hatred and bigotry following several burnings.

The Quran is the holy book of Islam and its most sacred text. It is not merely a book but is considered the literal word of God, and Muslims treat it with the utmost respect and reverence.

Muslims believe the Quran's text has been preserved in its original form since the time of its revelation about 1,400 years ago. As such, Muslims see the burning of the Quran as a [desecration of sacred scripture](#) and an unacceptable act.

Some Muslims believe that the targeting of Islamic holy symbols for desecration is evidence of a wider climate of hatred towards Muslims and is encouraged by the European far right.