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# Paris: 11/13/15
## Analysis and Policy Options

## Summary[1]

The November 13th attacks on carefully chosen targets in Paris have been claimed by the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) and were deliberately meant to kill and injure as many civilians as possible. The attacks were complex and well-coordinated, involving homegrown as well as (returned) foreign fighters (FFs). Judging by the terrorists' tactics and methods, the Paris attacks indeed bear IS's trademark. "Paris" was the latest in a string of IS attacks outside Syria and Iraq, and suggest that IS has shifted its attention away from the caliphate to external targets to create fear and undermine societies elsewhere, notably in anti-IS coalition members. As such, it marks a significant shift in IS's operations and illustrates the vulnerabilities of European security services and the impossibility of exercising full control.

France was not a random target. Militarily, for quite some time already, France has been actively engaged in Africa, the Middle East, and the Gulf. Domestically, it has the highest number of foreign fighters and returnees. Persistent neglect of the *banlieues* (suburbs) over recent decades has led to serious societal problems, providing fertile ground for home-grown Salafist and Islamist threats. Moreover, France has consistently prioritized repressive rather than preventive measures, ignoring radicalization at an early stage and the need for grass-root human intelligence and viable institutionalized dialogue between public and religious representatives.

In view of the complexity of the Paris attacks and, thus, the degree of planning required, it is probably unlikely that these attacks were in response to France's recent decision to attack IS in Syria and/or to recent frustrations on the ground. Rather, they appear to be part of a broader strategy called for by IS to strike Westerners wherever they are, "especially the spiteful and filthy French". The IS franchises pledging allegiance to Raqqa have created a wider network of agents who are capable of bringing the fight "home".

From a domestic political perspective, French President Hollande's unprecedented response has been in favor of harsh, repressive measures and strict pan-European approaches to the refugee problem. His political opponents have called for an even stronger response; few have called for more preventive action. France's latest measures are likely to antagonize relations between Muslims and non-Muslims, and to strengthen its opposition to accepting

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1   Summary by Mark Singleton.

more refugees. In terms of foreign policy, it remains unclear at this stage whether France will abandon its long-held position *vis-à-vis* Syria's President Assad, although France's overture toward Russia's President Putin could prove significant.

Hollande's repeated declarations of war and similar references by other heads of state would seem to suggest that an armed conflict is being waged across Europe. Clearly, this is not the case. Language matters, and such statements are reminiscent of US President Bush's post-9/11 counterproductive approach, and could potentially open the door to disproportional responses, including violations of human rights and the principles of the rule of law. These statements also feed into the terrorists' own rhetoric and intent to draw France and others into the war paradigm. These dreadful terrorist attacks should be dealt with, in a sober manner, via, amongst other things, regular criminal law.

Striking the right balance between preventive and repressive measures is critical. Measures are required at the national, European, and global levels. This starts with enhanced understanding of the root causes of radicalization, improvements in information gathering and sharing, as well as more and better community engagement. Comprehensive programs to tackle conditions in the *banlieues* are urgently required, as is better cooperation across Europe and beyond, with other affected countries. Clever approaches to returning FFs, including rehabilitation and reintegration programs, are lacking. Finally, an informed discussion on the opportunity costs of a 'boots on the ground' military operation to retake Mosul, Ramadi and Falluja in Iraq should also take place, whereby any military response, if chosen, should be regarded as only one part of a grand strategy that encompasses a multidisciplinary and multi-stakeholder comprehensive and long-term strategy in full compliance with international law and human rights.

## Introduction

Seven highly-coordinated attacks in the Paris conglomeration took place on Friday November 13, 2015. The day (Friday 13, Sabbath day) and the targets chosen clearly illustrate the will to hurt as many people as possible, and the symbolic value of the targets must not be underestimated (bars, a concert hall, and a football stadium – places where especially young people gather and that flout all radical Islamist prohibitions). All of the attackers allegedly used the same kind of AK-47s and Suicide Vest Improvised Explosive Devices (SVIEDs) filled with acetone peroxide, marking the first suicide attacks ever committed in France. How the perpetrators were able to obtain the weapons and explosives and manufacture the bomb vests without being detected by law enforcement authorities remains a question that has not been answered. It reflects European vulnerabilities and the difficulties in implementing preventive security measures to all sensitive sites (including airports, railway stations, and confessional buildings, etc.).

The attack was claimed by the self-proclaimed Islamic State (IS) one day after the events. In only one month, IS has claimed responsibility for at least three high-profile international terrorist attacks: in the Sinai against the Metrojet Russian charter on October 31 (224 dead); in a South End neighborhood of Beirut on November 12 (43 dead); and, last week, in Paris (129 dead). More generally, IS is also behind, inter alia, the attacks against a mosque in Kuwait (27 dead); a tourist resort in Tunisia (where 38 people died) in June 2015; in the Syrian Kurdish city of Kobani (146 casualties); in Suruc in Turkey (32 casualties) in July 2015; in Iraq (Diyala province and Baghdad) in August 2015 (when 126 people died); in Yemen in September 2015, causing the death of dozens of people; and in Ankara, Turkey, in October 2015 (102 casualties). These multiple and coordinated attacks illustrate the internationalization of IS's fight since September 2014 (see below) and the will of the organization to win the propaganda war against its rival Al-Qaeda. It appears that IS is no longer only interested in controlling the territory of its caliphate, but

has ambitions to create fear and undermine societies beyond the territory under its direct control. In various videos and in its own magazine, IS has announced and warned of more attacks against Western states. Although investigations are still ongoing, experts of the International Centre for Counter-Terrorism (ICCT) – The Hague and the Netherlands Institute for International Relations "Clingendael" shed light on some of the pressing questions that currently take central stage in the debates.

## 1. Why France?

Even though IS has announced attacks against various Western countries, France has been struck particularly hard. What could be the reason for France being singled out?
France's historic image as a crusader state and its role in holy wars, colonialism, and evangelization had a direct impact in making France a visible and highly symbolic target. However, other decisive circumstantial factors must also be taken into consideration.

### At the Military Level:
France is an active and prominent member of many military coalitions in the region, in particular against terrorist organizations. France instigated the Libyan intervention by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and is now military engaged in Mali/the Sahel (with 3,500 troops), in the Central African Republic (CAR) (with 950 troops), in the Gulf of Guinea (with 350 troops), in the African-led coalition against Boko Haram (advisors), in the Gulf of Aden (500 troops), in Lebanon (900 troops), and in Iraq (700 troops). Since September 27, 2015, France is also involved in Syria, with thirteen aircrafts and, more recently, the *Charles de Gaulle* aircraft carrier.

### At the Domestic Level:
France is dealing with an unknown but allegedly growing number of foreign fighters (FFs) who have returned from Syria. According to official French sources, more than 900 French citizens have left for Syria and/or Iraq. There are now 512 in the conflict zone and 137 have been killed. 73 per cent has joined IS.

There has been deliberate ignorance on the *banlieues* (suburbs) issue, which has resulted in a downward spiraling toward alienation, criminality and late ghettoization (with local fiefdoms and political compromises for tranquility). In addition, there seems to be a break of the social contract: lack of opportunities; geographical segregation; and growing inequalities (for example, 24 per cent unemployment versus 9.9 per cent elsewhere in France, and with 26 per cent for second or third generation immigrants, and poverty rates ten times higher than the rest of the country, with three out of ten children below the poverty line, and a two-years shorter life expectancy). Furthermore, France is increasingly dealing with home-grown Salafism and domestic Islamist threats. The particular emphasis on *laïcité* (secularity) in French society seems to complicate public religious debates significantly, as well as the involvement of the most prominent leaders in national discussions on the concerns raised by both the January 2015 attacks and the November 2015 attacks.
Clearly, much is still unknown about the motivation behind these attacks and the radicalization process of the perpetrators. Underlying factors for radicalization are context-specific, but radicalization also depends on the individual, his/her experiences in life, and his/her ability to cope with (personal) challenges. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify various push and pull factors that could play a role in this process. These factors could be relevant in a very local context, but also at a regional, national, or even international level. Which factor is most influential depends on the situation and the person. The graph shows an overview of different push and pull factors.

French lacunas in implementing preventive measures have been aggravating factors in the context of growing terrorist threats, also stemming from international military engagements. Notable examples are the weakness in addressing radicalization at an early stage, especially in prisons and amongst the most "vulnerable" groups/youth, the priority that has been given to digital scrutiny at the expense of grass-roots human intelligence, and the absence of viable institutionalized dialogue between public and religious representatives.

**Pull factors**

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|---|---|---|---|
| Emotional fulfillment | Religious indoctrination | Financial gains | Belonging to winning group |
| | Sense of social belonging | | Networks        Internet forums |
| Peer pressure | | Arms available | |
| **Local** | **National** | **Regional** | **International** |
| | Absence of governance in certain regions | | |
| | Lack of trust | Sectarianism | Israel–Palestine conflict |
| Mental problems | Lack of education | | |
| Identity problems | Lack of socio-economic opportunities | | Human rights abuse |
| | | | Double standards in policies |
| Broken families | Unemployment | | Porous borders/lack of border control |
| Moral degredation | Inferiority complex | | |
| | Religious sentiments | Stereotyping/profiling | |
| Broken families/absent father | Criminality | | |

**Push factors**

## 2. Are the Attacks a Consequence of French/ International Military Actions in Syria?

While France is actively engaged in all of the main military coalitions against terrorist organizations in Africa and the Middle East, the planning process of the November 13 attacks seems much older than the recent airstrike operations launched by France in September 2015 against IS in Syria. Incompressible logistical constraints make the Paris attacks most probably a long-planned operation, which perhaps even started after the January 2015 attacks against *Charlie Hebdo* magazine. It thus appears difficult to consider those attacks as a direct response to France's involvement in Syria.

The Paris attacks are part of IS's global strategy and must also be interpreted as one step of a continuum that started on September 22, 2014, with IS spokesman Abou Mohammed Al-Adnani's appeal to strike Westerners wherever they are, "especially the spiteful and filthy French". The attacks on the beach of Sousse and in the Bardo Museum in Tunisia, during the peace demonstration in Ankara, against the charter plane over the Sinai, in Beirut, or in Paris are isolated elements of the same message: IS can strike all over the globe and suffer no "internal" competition with Al-Qaeda. The international community, the Muslim *Ummah* (community), and other existing terrorist organizations (that is, Al-Qaeda and its affiliates in the Middle East and in North and sub-Saharan Africa) represent the three main audiences of those attacks.

During the course of this year, IS has succeeded in taking Mosul and expanding in Iraq and Syria, where the organization has established Islamic courts and collected taxes. It was first believed that – contrary to Al-Qaeda – the group was not interested in waging war all over the world and staging high-profile, highly symbolical and mass-casualty attacks. It sought to build a state. Then it raised the flag in Sirte, Libya, and created franchises where it found fertile ground (in other places in Libya, in Nigeria, in the Sinai Peninsula, and in Yemen). These branches are acting like cells of Al-Qaeda, but with a stricter command-and-control chain directly pointing to its self-proclaimed capital, Raqqa. On November 13, 2015 in Paris, IS allegedly conducted the first high-profile attack on Western soil, rivaling Al-Qaeda. With these kinds of spectacular attacks, IS might gain leverage over Al-Qaeda in the competition for people, resources, and visibility.

## 3. What are the Main Political/ Security Consequences and What are the Next Steps?

While the French domestic debate now appears exclusively focused on "muscular" solutions and security-based responses, attention must also be paid to the "war rhetoric" that is already being used by some state leaders.

### At the Domestic Level:
One day after the Paris attacks of November 13, political representatives ranging from left- to right-wing parties called for a shift in French foreign policy (especially regarding France's partnership with Russia and Turkey, and a new posture toward Assad's regime in Syria). Former French President Nicolas Sarkozy called on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of the Interior to consider France as being in a "state of war." As it already did after the *Charlie Hebdo* attacks, the extreme right-wing party *Front National* reiterated its three main policy points: better border control; the deprivation of French nationality for binational citizens involved in radical Islamist groups; and the closing down of Salafist mosques.

Suspicion against Muslim communities and public blame against their leaders (imams) and representatives (*le Conseil Français du Culte Musulman*) will most probably increase, along with ballooning popular reticence toward the refugee "flows." Unlike the January 2015 response, there were no grand public appeals for solidarity with Muslims after the Friday November 13 attacks, and no marches.

From the government's side, and besides all the measures in place since January 2015,[2] France's President François Hollande decreed a "state of emergency" and the re-establishment of border controls. Interior

Minister Bernard Cazeneuve announced forthcoming measures against radical preachers and mosques that allegedly sympathize with the Salafist cause. Home custody measures could also be decided against all French returnees from Syria or Iraq. Last, and similarly to the announcements made after the January 2015 attacks, French authorities announced 5,000 new positions within the security forces (police and *gendarmerie*), 2,500 for prison and judicial authorities, and 1,000 for customs officials.

The next UN Conference on Climate Change (COP21) later this month in Paris, the forthcoming Christmas period, and the EURO 2016 competition in June and July 2016 (with more than 2.5 million tickets already sold) will certainly confirm this security trend.

While the security/repressive approach is thus clearly present, at the time of writing no "comprehensive" strategy has been presented to deal with the underlying causes of radicalization or deradicalization (for instance, rehabilitation, reintegration, and exit programs for people at risk of radicalization and/or returnees). The parliamentary debates held so far in Paris have not revealed any significant "pressure" (from both right- and left-wing parties) in pursuing any preventive agendas.

On the military level, French defense forces have significantly increased their airstrikes on Raqqa since November 13. In the mid-term, any increase in military capabilities in Syria could, however, negatively impact (disengagement of) other ongoing military operations (Barkhane in the Sahel, Sangaris in CAR, support to the Boko Haram coalition, etc.).

In the specific context of the international talks on Syria, the French "neither Assad, nor IS" posture could be challenged, as well as the United States' current willingness to involve other Islamist groups in the discussions, especially Ahrar al-Sham.

### At the Military International Level:
The French have invoked article 42.7 of the Lisbon Treaty, which obliges giving military assistance. It says: *If a Member*

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2 'Terrorist Alert' status for the Paris region; '*loi renseignement*' adopted in June 2015; creation of the *Etat-major opérationnel de prevention du terrorisme* – EMOPT; around 2,500 new recruitments for the Ministry of the Interior and the Justice departments.

*State is the victim of armed aggression on its territory, the other Member States shall have towards it an obligation of aid and assistance by all the means in their power, in accordance with Article 51 of the United Nations Charter*.

This largely transcends article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty, which also commits NATO member states to assistance, but which gives the member states free reign over how and how much. President Hollande's announcement obliges all EU member to provide military assistance if requested. This can be considered as "being-at-war-together". Invoking article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty was not preferred by the French, because in that case another Hollande initiative, namely to combat IS together with Putin, would be less of an option.

Article 42.7 is a deliberate choice (the mutual assistance clause and not the solidarity clause that applies to assistance in case of terrorist attacks, article 222), because it involves a "commitment" by the other EU member states to assist France. This could involve any kind of assistance: intelligence; arresting IS fighters; joining in the battle against IS; border control, etc. Another reason is that article 222 mentions assistance "in its territory" (that is, of France and not outside the French realm) and "the EU acts" would offer less latitude to (the state of) France.

On the afternoon of Tuesday November 17, 2015, the first bilateral consultation took place at the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs on a possible Dutch contribution within the framework of article 42.7. This contribution can be offered as additional assistance in the air above the IS caliphate, or as "backfill" in the Sahel or Europe (Germany and Ireland have already indicated their willingness to "take over" the French military mission in the Mali/Sahel region). As long as other EU countries in, for example, the Sahel region, where the Netherlands is already taking part in the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), do little or nothing, it is not unlikely that the Dutch will keep explicit offers to assist at arm's length. The fundamental decision

to invoke the hereto never enforced article 42.7 is remarkable: on November 16, 2015, Hollande turned the EU into a military alliance.

In this context, the more general war rhetoric by European politicians, such as Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, should also be addressed. Whether or not you are "at war" with an entity is – in legal terms – not dependent on remarks by government officials. It is determined by the facts and the situation on the ground. Currently, a non-international armed conflict is going on between Iraq and IS (among several other armed conflicts) and, in this context, Iraq is supported, *inter alia*, by the Netherlands. The members of the international coalition, including the Netherlands, are hence already participating in an armed conflict against IS. Rutte made a broader statement, however. He noted: "We are dealing with an armed conflict in Syria and Iraq. IS is our enemy. We are at war with them."[3] Since the Netherlands is not (yet) involved in Syria, however, this statement probably has a more symbolic value.

One might wonder whether, by making such statements, you are not giving too much credit to the terrorists. Rutte was still talking about the situation in the Middle East, but his opinion is also heard more generally. On the streets of France and London, however, there is no war going on. The attacks of Friday 13 were not acts of war (see the qualification by Hollande), but dreadful terrorist attacks. In the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and France, international humanitarian law (the law applied to armed conflicts) is not applicable. Alleged terrorists should arguably be dealt with, in a sober manner, via, amongst other things, regular criminal law. These statements are also very reminiscent, incidentally, of US President Bush's statements after 9/11. This opens the door for disproportional responses, and violations of international law, human rights, and the principles of the rule of law. Even according to US President Obama, one of the excesses

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3    Press conference of the Prime Minister, November 14, 2015.

of the war on terror (Guantánamo Bay) has probably created more terrorists than it has ever detained.

## 4. What Should the Next Steps Be? Finding the Right Balance between Preventive and Repressive Measures

Besides all the repressive measures already listed and the necessary intensification of European cooperation and intelligence sharing among countries:

### At the Military Level:
Discussions on the opportunity costs of a "boots on the ground" military operation to retake Mosul, Ramadi, and Falluja in Iraq should take place. Whether this entails troops' detachments of the international coalition or by facilitating Iraqi or Kurdish troops through technical and material support is a political question, which needs to be discussed by the partners in the international coalition. The main objective of such actions could be to disrupt IS's sources of income (revenues from oil/gas trade, taxes, etc.) and prevent any "communicating vessels" effects between Syria and Iraq IS's strongholds in the short term. It would furthermore prevent any waterbed effect of reallocation of IS troops as a result of the strong military offensive against IS in Syria through air raids. The Syria and the Iraq contexts are after all highly interrelated and these two countries now represent the stronghold for a post-9/11 "third-generation jihad."[4] Focusing on Raqqa's IS fighters with no parallel measures in Iraq would then compromise the success of the military response.

To ease the negative effects of G.W. Bush's War on Terror doctrine, President Obama favored a light footprint involvement and a priority to targeted airstrikes against high profile Al-Qaeda and, later, IS leaders. This – still controversial – strategy has weakened Al-Qaeda, especially its franchise in the Afghanistan–Pakistan region and in the Arabic Peninsula. However, delays in identifying IS high-profile targets had negative consequences on global security by indirectly encouraging Al-Qaeda fighters to "move to the competition."

A clear military strategy addressing the main active terrorist organizations could have a "demotivating" effect on Al-Qaeda and IS fighters and be an operative option to disrupt the identified and legitimate chain of command of these organizations. However, long-term negative consequences of these airstrikes, which nurture the group's narrative and feed local opposition (as opposite to "winning hearts and minds"), should not be underestimated. In the end, and using the words of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: "Missiles may kill terrorists. But, I am convinced that good governance is what will kill terrorism." Historic Research by RAND furthermore shows that, in general, only 7 per cent of terrorist organizations end as a result of military interventions, more than 40 per cent by policing, and also more than 40 per cent through political negotiation.[5] Military responses should therefore only be part of a grand strategy that encompasses a multidisciplinary, multi-stakeholder and long-term approach in full compliance with international law and human rights.

### At the Security Level:
A strengthening of human intelligence capabilities in European suburbs (like the Paris conglomeration, or in the Brussels municipality of Molenbeek) and a reinforcement of dialogue with religious representatives is an urgent necessity. Community police (effective in Great Britain in strengthening the link between the government and the suburban community, but abandoned in France in 2003), local and

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4    See G. Kepel, 'L'Etat islamique cherche à déclencher une guerre civile', *Le Monde*, November 14, 2015, http://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2015/11/14/gilles-kepel-l-etat-islamique-cherche-a-declencher-la-guerre-civile-en-france_4809962_3232.html.

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5    Seth G. Jones and Martin C. Libicki, 'How Terrorist Groups End: Lessons for Countering Al Qa'ida', RAND publication, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG741-1.html.

social mediators, or any other legitimate field agents could be in a position to overcome the missing link with the central state (authorities). These actors could indeed play a positive role in recognizing early warning signals, but could also intervene through various methods in an early stage. However, the already-mentioned, deeply-rooted, French "*laïcité*" culture complicates some of these options (especially the police option and dialogue between public servants and religious representatives).

### At the European Level:

Legislative harmonization on arms trafficking, and better public control on foreign financing of places of worships and/or religious leaders' training programs need to be urgently discussed at the appropriate level. At the same time, EU member states should immediately resort to the use of in-place instruments such as the Schengen Information System (SIS)[6] and engage in a constructive discussion about data protection and possible Passenger Name Record (PNR) systems.

Furthermore, strengthening the partnerships with other impacted countries that have already developed their own expertise in addressing the issue of radicalism is recommended. Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, or Mauritania could certainly help other and more recently home-grown terrorism-affected countries such as Spain, the United Kingdom, or France. Morocco, for instance, long alerted the Belgian authorities to the situation in Molenbeek, especially concerning cases of Moroccan citizens radicalized in this commune. A Euro-Africa dialogue on violent extremism (with intelligence, expertise, and/or training as specific modules) could be one of the first steps worth considering.

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6   While Salah Abdeslam was already reported as a suspect in Belgium, he successfully managed to cross the French–Belgian border immediately after the attacks, because the French police did not have this information and did not consider him as a possible threat.

At the national/local level, before anything, priority should be to map out the underlying root causes, hot spots for radicalization, and vulnerabilities in the state, cities, and neighborhoods. The main objective here would be to support a transition from a repressive to a preventive strategy against violent extremism. Research into these causes is long overdue.

Addressing the root causes of radicalization appears indeed as the main priority to prevent future attacks. Ghettoization, social inequalities, discrimination, and education gaps are some of the urgent issues that need to be addressed. The ineffectiveness of past plans and programs should encourage debates on identity, social cohesion, and political integration within the national territory (more than ten "*plans banlieues*" in France during the last 40 years). These programs clearly merit long-term commitments, in order to prevent a next generation of violent extremists.

### Returnees' Rehabilitation Programs:

The European disparities at play create a security gap within the Schengen space. Existing experiences (in Denmark, Finland, Austria, and Germany) should encourage a broader European reflection, especially in the context of the bombing of Raqqa, which could push some FFs to return to France. The issue of FFs' rehabilitation would then become a core element of forthcoming programs against violent radicalization. Existing expertise in the Maghreb could in this case be particularly useful (see, for instance, the positive results of the cooperation between Spain and Morocco concerning the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla).

## Concluding Remarks

The numerous attacks led by IS in Iraq, Syria, Turkey, Lebanon, or France over recent months, and the long-time proven existence of home-grown terrorist cells in European countries spark fear of new actions in the forthcoming months. IS's "internationalized" strategy and the hundreds of foreign fighters now hosted in the European countries are

strong and worrying signals in that context. IS-networked attacks are directly inspired by past "simple armed assaults" such as those in Washington DC and in Moscow in 2002, or in Mumbai in 2008, which "create plenty of casualties and generate the same amount of fear as complex, sophisticated attacks. (…) It's repeatable, cheap, and effective."[7]

Much more attention should now be paid to preventing radicalization, cutting off supply lines, raising thresholds by increasing security measures, protecting the critical infrastructure of high-risk places/persons, and increasing security at soft targets, by investing in social resilience and coping mechanisms.

As dramatically emphasized by the Belgian Molenbeek situation, state control, political dialogue, and economic opportunities for the youth represent core points of any long-standing and viable countering strategy for violent extremism. Experiences from other countries, within the EU and abroad, are central here in: (i) identifying the most effective factors for returnees' rehabilitation programs; (ii) fostering dialogue with the most vulnerable groups (the less educated youth, from poor suburbs and with no viable opportunity); (iii) developing targeted programs to prevent radicalization in highly conducive places (jails and some selected mosques in disadvantaged neighborhoods); and (iv) "reconnecting" the state and public authorities with the peripheral and neglected suburbs.

## POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

– The November 13, 2015 attacks in Paris are the last illustration of IS's internationalization strategy, which started in September 2014. It is likely that other attacks will follow. Post-November 13 "alerts", like the ones in Hanover on November 17 and in Paris on November 18, in addition to the worst

refugee crisis since the Second World War, are testing Europe's resilience.
– Ineffective previous policies that were implemented to tackle home-grown radicalism and the lack of harmonized legislations and policies at the EU level will only allow this threat to continue, in the best-case scenario, and will more likely contribute to its blooming.
– The exaggerated attention devoted to immediate, security-based and narrow-sighted repressive measures over long-term, deep-rooted and preventive mechanisms will restrain a full understanding of this phenomenon, as well as implementation of long-standing solutions.
– Viable strategy implies (i) social measures and multi-level support to "neglected" areas and vulnerable population groups; (ii) targeted programs addressing radicalism in highly conducive places; (iii) support to initiatives and relevant actors (civil society, religious voices, and communities, etc.) that are able to strengthen central–peripheral relationships; and (iv) intelligence measures/early-warning mechanisms that are aimed at improving our awareness of the root causes leading to violence.
– Existing expertise on these issues should encourage dialogue between Europe and its immediate neighbors (especially from the Maghreb region), and beyond. Such discussions should lead to an enhanced information-sharing process and could contribute to assisting the EU in designing preventive strategies and rehabilitation programs for radicalized subjects.
– These latest attacks in Paris illustrate the connections at play between the development of home-grown radicalism in Europe and the unresolved conflicts in the Middle East, notably in Syria and Iraq. Any effective military strategy should address the complexities of both countries rather than focusing on Syria alone – especially in order to prevent a waterbed effect (whereby pushing down in one place results in popping up elsewhere) with IS strongholds in Iraq.

7   C. Watts, 'What Paris Taught Us about the Islamic State', *War on the Rocks*, http://warontherocks.com/2015/11/what-paris-taught-us-about-the-islamic-state/#, November 16, 2015.

## About Clingendael

Clingendael is the Netherlands Institute of International Relations. We operate as a think-tank, as well as a diplomatic academy, and always maintain a strong international perspective. Our objective is to explore the continuously changing global environment in order to identify and analyse emerging political and social developments for the benefit of government and the general public.

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## About ICCT

The International Centre for Counter-Terrorism – The Hague (ICCT) is an independent think tank and knowledge hub that focuses on information creation, collation and dissemination pertaining to the preventative and international legal aspects of counter-terrorism. ICCT's work focuses on themes at the intersection of preventing and countering violent extremism and human rights and rule of law related aspects of counter-terrorism.

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