



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on February 8, 2016

## German Intelligence Says ISIS Fighters Are Among Refugees

Hans-Georg Maaßen (shown), the president of Germany's domestic security agency (known as the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution — BfV) told ZDF, the German public broadcaster, on February 5 that his agency has received more than 100 warnings that Islamic State (ISIS) militants have entered his nation among refugees. Maaßen said:



We have repeatedly seen that terrorists ... have slipped in camouflaged or disguised as refugees. This is a fact that the security agencies are facing.

We are trying to recognize and identify whether there are still more IS fighters or terrorists from IS that have slipped in.

While noting the need for caution, Maaßen also sought to assure Germans that the government was doing everything possible to head off the terrorist threat:

We are in a serious situation and there is a high risk that there could be an attack. But the security agencies, the intelligence services and the police authorities are very alert and our goal is to minimize the risk as best we can.

Maaßen said there was “concrete evidence there are people planning terror attacks in Germany,” but there’s “no indication of an imminent attack.”

The *Atlantic* reported that Maaßen’s statement came a day after police in Berlin arrested three Algerians with suspected ties to ISIS who, they say, were planning a terrorist attack on the German capital. Among those arrested was a man held at a refugee shelter in Attendorn, Germany, who was the alleged head of the terrorist cell. German authorities said he entered the European Union posing as a refugee.

The European refugee crisis began in 2015, when large numbers of refugees fleeing turmoil in places such as Syria, Libya, Afghanistan, and Iraq started traveling to Europe to seek asylum. Germany initially accepted the lion’s share of refugees, taking in more than half a million of these migrants from the Middle East, more than twice as many as the next-highest European Union nation — France. However, it announced a sudden change in policy last September and decided to restrict the flow of migrants across its borders.

Germany’s Interior Minister Thomas de Mazière announced the change in policy on September 13, noting:

At this moment Germany is temporarily introducing border controls again along [the EU’s] internal borders. The focus will be on the border to Austria at first. The aim of these measures is to limit the current inflows to Germany and to return to orderly procedures when people enter the country.



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De Mazière explained that the new restrictions were partly necessary for security reasons and added: “This step has become necessary. The great readiness to help that Germany has shown in recent weeks ... must not be overstretched.”

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris on November 13, European authorities became more vigilant concerning the possibility of members of ISIS and other Islamic terrorist groups hiding themselves among the immense flow of refugees to enter Europe.

The concern was legitimate. Last October, Abdelhamid Abaaoud, the individual French and Belgian officials suspected was the mastermind of the attacks, falsely identified himself as Ahmad al Muhammad and was allowed to enter Greece among the waves of Syrian refugees flooding into Europe. Abaaoud fled Belgium to Syria following a January 15 police raid on a terrorist operation to which he belonged. In February, he was quoted by the Islamic State’s (ISIS’s) English-language magazine, *Dabiq*, as saying that he had secretly returned to Belgium to lead the terror cell. That he reentered the country so easily, despite his picture having been broadcast in the news, was indicative of the very poor border security prevalent in Europe.

French President François Hollande, however, apparently did not get the message. Speaking to a gathering of France’s mayors on November 18, Hollande said his nation would continue to welcome refugees despite the security concerns voiced by many of his countrymen following the Paris terrorist attacks.

“Life should resume fully,” Hollande told the mayors, “France should remain as it is. Our duty is to carry on our lives.”

Hollande added that “30,000 refugees will be welcomed over the next two years. Our country has the duty to respect this commitment.”

The possibility of ISIS terrorists hiding among refugees fleeing turmoil in Syria and elsewhere has also been ignored by U.S. officials. The U.S. State Department announced on November 6 that the United States planned to open a refugee settlement processing center in Erbil, Iraq, before the end of 2015 and would resume refugee processing in Lebanon in early 2016. These steps are intended to speed up the processing of refugees for admission to the United States.

During a joint press appearance in Berlin on September 20 with German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry revealed the Obama administration’s plan to drastically increase the flow of refugees into the United States, mentioning specifically refugees from Syria. “I’m pleased to announce today that the United States will significantly increase our numbers for refugee resettlement in the course of this next year and the year after,” Kerry said. “Last year I think we were at 70,000,” he noted, referring to number of refugees the United States accepted from around the world. Kerry continued: “We are now going to go up to 85,000 with at least, and I underscore the ‘at least’ — it is not a ceiling, it’s a floor — 10,000 over the next year from Syria specifically even as we also receive more refugees from other areas. And in the next fiscal year, we’ll target 100,000, and if it’s possible to do more, we’ll do [more].”

In response to these announced policies, more than half of the nation’s governors openly opposed allowing refugees from Syria to settle in their states, the first two being Rick Snyder of Michigan and Robert Bentley of Alabama.

Texas Governor Gregg Abbott sent an open letter to President Obama in November that stated, in part:



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As governor of Texas, I write to inform you that the State of Texas will not accept any refugees from Syria in the wake of the deadly terrorist attack in Paris.

Further, I — and millions of Americans — implore you to halt your plans to accept more Syrian refugees in the United States. A Syrian “refugee” appears to have been part of the Paris terror attack. American humanitarian compassion could be exploited to expose Americans to similar deadly danger. The reasons for such concerns are plentiful.

Fallout from the Paris attacks also impacted the U.S. presidential race and several candidates made public statements afterward expressing their views on whether or not the United States should admit refugees from countries where terrorism is prevalent.

Retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson told reporters in Orlando, Florida: “If we’re going to be bringing 200,000 people over here from that region — if I were one of the leaders of the global jihadist movement and I didn’t infiltrate that group of people with my people, that would be almost malpractice.”

Florida Senator Marco Rubio said on ABC’s *This Week*: “We won’t be able to take more refugees” from Syria. “It’s not that we don’t want to — it’s that we can’t.”

Texas Senator Ted Cruz said even before the Paris attacks, while campaigning in Michigan, that the Obama administration’s plan to accept refugees from war-torn Syria is “nothing short of crazy” because he believes some are ISIS terrorists. “There is a reason the director of national intelligence said among those refugees are no doubt a significant number of ISIS terrorists,” said Cruz. “It would be the height of foolishness to bring in tens of thousands of people including jihadists that are coming here to murder innocent Americans.”

Business magnate Donald Trump told CNBC: “We have no idea who these people are, we are the worst when it comes to paperwork. This could be one of the great Trojan horses.... We cannot let them into this country, period.”

The findings of German intelligence authorities that there are ISIS terrorists among the refugees who have entered Germany should certainly make U.S. officials wary of allowing these refugees to enter the United States, at least until a more reliable vetting process can be developed.

*Photo: AP Images*

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