

Press Release
7 January 2015

Attack in Paris on 7 January: Government statement

In Paris at 11.30 a.m. on Wednesday, three heavily armed men entered the offices of weekly magazine CHARLIE HEBDO and opened fire. Twelve people died in the attack, including two police officers. Dozens of people were injured, and some of their lives are hanging in the balance.

Shocked by this barbaric act, which saw women and men murdered in cold blood, the Prime Minister offered his deepest condolences to President François Hollande, the victims' families and the people of France.

Belgium will give the French authorities the assistance of the relevant Belgian services with the tracking and arrest of the culprits.

Freedom of expression and freedom of the press must be upheld in our country, a democratic State governed by the rule of law. We cannot tolerate this brutal assault on constitutional freedoms. The Belgian government strongly condemns this atrocity.

Following the attack, the Prime Minister immediately called a meeting of the COLLEGE FOR INTELLIGENCE AND SECURITY, which took place this afternoon. The College is made up of representatives of the government and of all departments responsible for intelligence and security, and is chaired by the government's security advisor.

The College was tasked with analysing the level of security in Belgium in the aftermath of this attack.

It decided to step up surveillance measures for a number of specific institutions and interests.

Belgium's threat level will be maintained. However, it will have to be updated continually to enable the government to take all measures necessary to ensure the security of the country's citizens.

At present, the COORDINATING BODY FOR THREAT ANALYSIS places the threat level at 2 (on a four-point scale), and at 3 for certain specific interests. Vigilance remains vital.

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