

Militancy/Terrorism



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Germany Alert: ISKP issues call for attacks targeting Euro championship stadiums per May 9 reports; reiterates growing attempts to radicalize, stoke fear Europewide

Current Situation

- According to May 9 reports, Islamic State Khorasan Province's (ISKP) propaganda magazine 'Voice of Khorasan' released propaganda posters calling for terror attacks at football matches in Berlin, Dortmund, and Munich.
- Football stadiums in these cities are scheduled to host the 2024 UEFA European Football Championship (Euro 2024) from June 14 to July 14.
- The attack poster features the names of the three cities and a gunman, wearing a camouflage suit and carrying an assault rifle, standing in an empty stadium. The English text reads: "Where should we strike next?"
- Notably, on March 22, ISKP-linked militants allegedly carried out a [shooting attack targeting the Crocus City Hall in the Krasnogorsky District of Moscow region in Russia](#), which killed 139 people and injured 360.

Assessments & Forecast

1. This attack call, against the backdrop of [the April 8 call for attacks by IS targeting stadiums hosting Champions League matches in multiple stadiums in Europe](#), reflects ISKP's attempts to

rally its supporters by leveraging media traction generated by the March 22 Moscow attack. As such, the development reiterates the growing threat of Islamist terrorism in Europe, especially in Western European countries. That multiple transnational groups, including Islamic State (IS), al-Qaeda, and Hamas, have been calling for attacks against the West since the beginning of recent hostilities in Israel and the Palestinian Territories further supports this.

2. The fact that this threat was issued over a month before the start of the Euro tournament indicates that it is primarily aimed at radicalization, creating panic, and expanding ISKP's influence among already radicalized individuals in Europe. Indeed, the use of graphic imagery and English language in propaganda underscores ISKP's attempts to engage broader audiences in Europe.
3. Furthermore, given that this development marks at least the fourth attack call in Europe since the March 22 attack highlights ISKP's growing attempts to reorient its operational focus in Europe, likely due to its declining capabilities and presence in Afghanistan and the surrounding South Asian region. This reorientation can be attributed to Europe's geographic proximity to Asia and the relatively higher number of Middle Eastern and Central Asian immigrants, who are more susceptible and vulnerable to the group's radicalization and recruitment efforts.
4. In recent years, Central Asians, particularly Tajik immigrants Europewide have remained primary targets of ISKP's recruitment efforts, as evidenced by their involvement in the Moscow attacks and several foiled plots Europewide. **FORECAST:** However, judging by the recent shift in the ISKP's radicalization attempts, it is likely to increase its recruitment efforts aimed at broader Islamist cadres, including traditional IS supporters, home-grown cells, and self-radicalized individuals, to increase its organizational capabilities in the region.
5. **FORECAST:** With that, the risk of coordinated and multi-pronged attack plots is expected to increase regionwide in the near-to-medium term. However, the complexity of large-scale coordinated attacks makes them more susceptible to interception. Consequently, while the frequency of planned and attempted coordinated attacks may increase, their success rates are likely to remain low.
6. **FORECAST:** That said, the increased traction of such propaganda among self-radicalized Islamist elements increases the risk of successful lone-actor attacks that are relatively difficult to detect yet easy to execute. Given precedent, such attacks are likely to manifest in the form of stabbings and vehicular ramming, which require less planning. Moreover, given the increased availability of weapons on the black market in Europe, the risk of attackers using firearms and/or explosive devices also remains.
7. **FORECAST:** Authorities are likely to designate the upcoming Euro tournament as a "high-risk" event in response to this threat. With that, authorities are liable to implement bolstered security measures, including increased security checks near at-risk locations, and maintain a lower security threshold in responding to any potential threat.
8. **FORECAST:** Moreover, given that heightened security measures will decrease the feasibility of any planned attacks at stadiums themselves, attackers are also likely to seek to target other related areas with higher footfall within these cities, such as public transportation hubs and popular tourist destinations, which may have comparatively lower security measures in place.

Recommendations

1. Those operating or residing in Germany in the coming weeks are advised to maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of the aforementioned stadiums during the slated games due to the calls for attacks by ISKP.
2. Maintain heightened vigilance in the vicinity of large public gatherings due to the elevated threat of Islamist terrorism.
3. Remain abreast of authorities' security-related updates.
4. Alert authorities immediately upon witnessing suspicious items or behavior.
5. If a potential stabbing, shooting, explosion, or similar incident manifests, leave the area immediately if possible, or take shelter at a secure location. Public, private, and third-sector organizations are advised to increase their awareness of threats on social media through the use of threat monitoring services.

6. Increased awareness of an organization's political footprint and perceptions from online fringe groups can help uncover potential violent actors and plots before they occur.
7. For further questions and risk assessments, please contact intel@max-security.com