

General Intelligence and Security Service Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

# ANNUAL REPORT

# per undas adversas

Louis Einthoven, the first head of the National Security Service (Binnenlandse Veiligheidsdienst BVD), the predecessor of today's General Intelligence and Security Service (Algemene Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst), was responsible for the service's motto and shield. He believed that citizens in a democracy such as ours must play an active role in society, and not just passively drift along on the waves of history.

The motto he chose was **Per Undas Adversas**; against the current. Living fish swim against the current; only the dead ones are carried along. This saying symbolises the service's mentality; it is an active organisation, working against the current if necessary, watching out for threats to national security.

This is the annual report 2013 by the AIVD. In this last year the AIVD was yet again required to call forth all its skills in various spheres.

One of the areas of attention was the matter of Dutch citizens travelling to Syria to fight for jihad. Their numbers have rapidly grown in 2013, not only in the Netherlands but also in other European countries. This could potentially mean a large threat to security. The travellers are predominantly young people who experience fierce violence, are ideologically incited, acquire international contacts and subsequently a number of them return to Europe. This issue shows to which extent the service's foreign intelligence work is linked to our national security.

In 2013 the AIVD has also been very active in the area of cyber threat. Nowadays an increasing number of transactions and interactions between organisations, individuals and companies take place in digital space. And thus that is also where potential threats, as well as the possibility to obtain intelligence about these threats, occur. Cyber threats do not respect country borders and so obviously all intelligence work is done – where necessary – in collaboration with other services.

Also prior to and during large events (such as the succession in 2013 and the NSS summit in 2014) the service gathers intelligence that contributes to securing the course of these events. To this end we closely collaborate with partners both nationally and internationally.

When the new Cabinet was instated economy measures were announced and the AIVD was confronted with massive expenditure cuts, which will be gradually increased during the time frame of 2015 to 2018. Since then a way has been found to meet the first portion of the cuts. In part this has been

managed by efficiency measures, but a limited cutback in the service's primary process cannot be prevented. Fortunately, the Cabinet reached a budget agreement in the autumn of 2013 in which it was decided that the cuts imposed on the AIVD are to be halved. Nevertheless, it remains an immense task to implement these cuts, especially in a time when the developments worldwide demand outstanding intelligence work.

Edward Snowden's disclosures about the work of the American Intelligence Service NSA have led to violent discussions all around the world about the balance between security and privacy. Obviously, questions have also been asked about the AIVD; does it stick to its legal boundaries? This has been investigated by the Intelligence and Security Services Regulatory Commission (CTIVD). In its report of March 2014 the commission concluded that the AIVD observes the rules correctly but that certain procedures should be modernised and adjusted to the latest topical matters. The Cabinet has confirmed that it will take up the basic proposal.

Already before Snowden entered the stage it had been decided that the -twelve year old- Intelligence and Security Services Act 2002 (Wiv 2002) should be re-assessed. In December 2013 a committee led by Stan Dessens provided the Dutch Lower House with a report, including several recommendations, to which the Cabinet has issued its preliminary reaction. It is clear that in part the Act needs to be revised and that, as the report suggests, a "new balance" between security and privacy has to be found. Ultimately, the Cabinet's bills will be treated by the Lower and Upper House.

It stands to reason that intelligence and security services do not conduct their work in the spotlights. Nevertheless, the service does try to be as open as possible within the boundaries of the law, which – after all – is there to enable the service to do its job efficiently and securely.

Yet again the annual report provides an accurate and extensive picture of all the areas in which the service is involved.

Operational details are never publically divulged, but the supervisory commission CTIVD, as well as the parliamentary monitoring committee CIVD do have access to this information.

During the last eighteen months in which I have had political responsibility for the AIVD, I have become very impressed by the high level of work, the commitment and professionalism of all its employees. Most people get regular acknowledgement of their work, through publicity, from visitors, even from friends and family. Not so the AIVD employees, they must do their work completely out of view. Even in their own homes they are limited in what they can say or share about their work. Only seldom can the results of their work be made public or can it be made clear how severe the threats were that they have managed to avert. So I would like to take this opportunity to express my great thanks and enormous respect for the AIVD people. This country and the world would undoubtedly be less safe without their continuous efforts.



**Dr Ronald Plasterk**Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

# foreword

## SECRET, BUT NOT SECRETIVE



In the last couple of years the activities of the AIVD have been largely governed by the unstable situation in North-Africa and the Middle East. The conflict in Syria caused youngsters of various backgrounds to leave the Netherlands and to join the opposition that was fighting the Bashar al Assad regime. Already at an early stage the AIVD was concerned about this phenomenon and at the end of January it decided to put it to the notice of the general public. In the meantime more than a hundred individuals have travelled to Syria. The age of these travellers is decreasing constantly and the number of women in this group is growing. In 2013 numerous fighters have returned to our country, frequently bearing alarming baggage: they are trained, traumatised or radicalised even further.

The fight in Syria also causes an internal divide within the Muslim community, both nationally and internationally. This leads to unrest and a hardening in points of view. The voices from more moderate circles that attempt to subdue the conflict thus are in danger of being stifled, ignored or even condemned.

The fact that we have such an excellent co-operation with the National Coordinator for Counter-terrorism and Security (NCTV), the Public Prosecution Office, the National Police Service and the local authorities has made it possible for us to deploy our limited resources in a well-targeted manner. At the same time we have also been able to pass on our unique knowledge about this phenomenon.

The situation in Syria has once again made very clear that internal security and external security are inextricably connected. Profound knowledge about the regime, about its possession and alleged usage of weapons of mass destruction, and also insight in the risks of spreading these kinds of weapons in the region are not only necessary to support the decision-making of the Dutch government, but also to understand and interpret the actions of the opposition and the consequences those actions have on jihadist fighters.

These developments concerning Syria particularly underline that international co-operation is not a choice but a necessity. The free movement of individuals within the Schengen countries and the literally unlimited character of the Internet offer unprecedented possibilities to people with good intentions, but at the same time they are also advantageous for elements with bad intentions. The service has, therefore, also in 2013 strongly invested in collaboration with its partner services.

The Internet, or more generally speaking, the increasing digitisation has been a second key factor for the AIVD in 2013.

We have seen how digital space is used to disseminate the jihadist body of thought, to help youngsters to radicalise and to help them with their travel abroad or with preparations for attacks. We have ascertained that in a number of countries politics, trade and industry and secret services in close collaboration with each other use the digital space to muddy the economic waters, which causes any level playing field to disappear. We have also ascertained that malevolent parties are capable of quite simply encrypting their communication to keep their intentions and their actions hidden.

In 2013 the AIVD has, therefore, been yet again compelled to make large investments to be able to continue to perform its legal tasks in this dynamic digital world. Well-tried methods of information processing all of a sudden prove to be obsolete or they will become so in the near future. This means that new techniques, tactics and procedures need to be developed and tested against the law. Probably this investment has been most tangible in the process of establishing the Joint Sigint Cyber Unit, a large-scale collaboration between the AIVD and MIVD.

Even though it does take up a large part of the limited financial means at our disposal, the ability to adequately operate in cyber space is an absolute must for the effectiveness of a secret service.

The disclosures of Edward Snowden have focused the public discussion on the actions of secret services in the digital era. For the service there is a certain advantage in that. But at the same time we cannot close our eyes to the risks of our modi operandi being disclosed or our sources being compromised. We must be vigilant so that malevolent parties cannot better their positions.

In the performance of its tasks the AIVD invariably impedes on the privacy of individuals in some way or other. We take this fact very seriously and we never do it without good reason. The service is only interested in those individuals, organisations or countries that try to disrupt our country in some way or those that try to encroach on our national sovereignty. Our guideline is the Intelligence and Security Services Act 2002 (WIV 2002).

We are a secret service, but we do not want to be secretive. Our tasks and powers are governed by law; our actions are subject to public justification. This annual report is part of that. Our actions are only secret to a certain extent, and with good reason: we must protect our sources and prevent unauthorized parties to gather knowledge about our activities. Fortunately, this secret part of our work is also monitored closely. It enables my people to contribute to safeguarding our democratic constitutional state – a job they devote themselves to daily with their hearts and souls.

#### **Rob Bertholee**

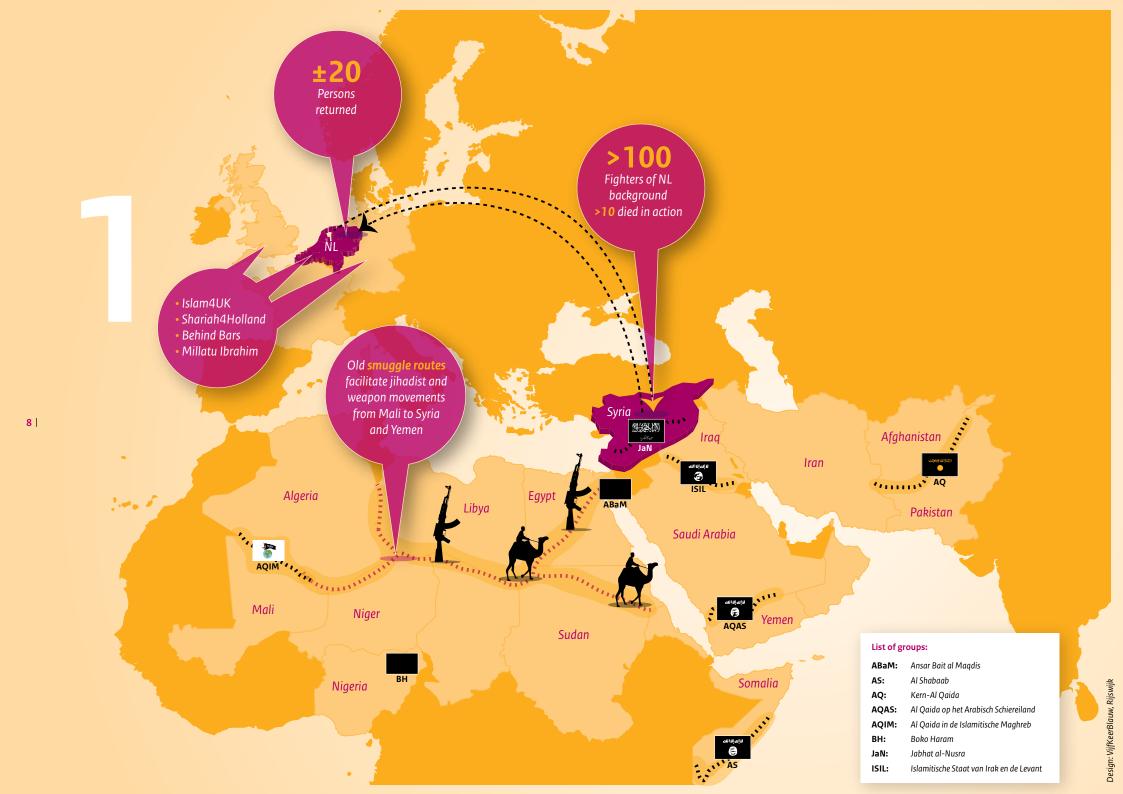
Head of the General Intelligence and Security Service

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## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA:

## UNREST, INSTABILITY AND THEIR IMPACT UPON DUTCH SECURITY INTERESTS

The international security situation in 2013 was dominated by the regional instability and increasing discord in the Middle East and North Africa. Of particular concern to the Netherlands was the participation of more than 100 of its citizens in the civil war in Syria. Other issues affecting Dutch interests included the use of chemical weapons in Syria, our government's decision to participate in the international mission in Mali and the interim agreement with Iran concerning its nuclear programme.

Against this background, it has become more vital than ever that domestic and international intelligence gathering be closely co-ordinated. Accurate assessment of the threat facing the Netherlands requires a good understanding of the conflict in Syria and its impact upon other nations in the region. A reliable and up-to-date appraisal of the danger posed by returning fighters is only possible with solid intelligence about the jihadist networks active in Syria and the surrounding territories. The room for manoeuvre available to these

networks in countries like Egypt and Lebanon is determined by the strength and intentions of both governments and other, unofficial regional players in the Middle East.

### **1.1** Dutch jihadists in Syria and the threat to the Netherlands

More than 100 people travelled to Syria from the Netherlands in 2013 with the intention of taking part in jihadist activities there. The vast majority joined one of two groups, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) or Jabhat al-Nusra (JaN). A relatively small proportion of them, more than 20, returned home during the course of the year. The AIVD believes that at least ten individuals from the Netherlands were killed in Syria in 2013.

The civil war in Syria has been exerting a growing appeal for some groups of young Muslims in the Netherlands. On the internet, "martyrdom" in the struggle has been glorified ever more openly and explicitly as the greatest possible achievement in life, in a manner that engages effectively with a youthful audience here and in other European countries. Those actually persuaded to leave for Syria and accepted into the ranks of the jihadists there, several hundred people from across Europe, have been involved in heavy fighting and sometimes in atrocities. Consequently, as of the end of 2013 several dozen Dutch citizens are known both to have familiarised themselves with extreme violence and to have been further radicalised in their intolerant and violent ideological orientation.

The participation of foreign jihadists in the conflict in Syria has contributed to its escalation. Their experiences there, and the contacts they establish with international networks, mean that

they may well pose a threat to national security if and when they return home. For the jihadist groups active in Syria, the presence of European fighters represents an excellent opportunity to recruit individuals familiar with our region to commit acts of terrorism here. In addition, returnees could exploit their status as veterans to radicalise others in the Netherlands.

Al-Qaeda's involvement in the Syrian conflict adds an extra dimension to the threat. It still has every intention of carrying out attacks in the West, and the use of fighters from Europe could make that goal easier to achieve. It is conceivable that some will return home with an order to commit or facilitate such acts. There is also a risk that these fighters will form new networks in Europe, pooling their experiences either to perpetrate attacks or to assist new recruits wishing to fight in Syria or other conflict zones.

Since 11 September 2001, most known terrorist plots against the West have had their origins in one or other of the principal centres of jihadist activity, such as the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region, Yemen and Somalia. By this we mean that those responsible have visited the area and made contacts, received training and gained combat experience there. Some of the plots were probably directed from the region in question, too, although that is often difficult to ascertain with any certainty.

Table 1
Successful and unsuccessful terrorist attacks
by individuals who had previously been active
in a conflict zone.

Year	Description	Region visited
2005	Bomb attacks in London	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2006	Foiled plot to bomb trans-Atlantic flights	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2007	Foiled attack in Copenhagen	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2007	Foiled attack by Sauerland Group in Germany	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2007	Foiled attacks in London and Glasgow	Iraq
2008	Foiled attack on cartoonist Kurt Westergaard in Denmark	Somalia
2009	Failed "underwear bombing" of Amsterdam-Detroit Flight by Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab	Yemen
2010	Foiled attack on the newspaper Jyllands-Posten in Denmark	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2012	Attacks by Mohammed Merah in France	Pakistan/Afghanistan
2013	Murder of British soldier Lee Rigby.	Somalia

#### **1.1.1** Fight in Syria causes radicalisation and divisions in the Muslim community

As well as potentially posing a direct threat, returnees from Syria might also have a radicalising and mobilising effect upon fellow Muslims. In the Netherlands, they could act as the catalyst pushing some young people already attracted by a radical strand of Islam into militant activism. That could strengthen local radical groups and spread their message to a wider audience.

A new, more activist form of radical Islam has emerged across Europe in the past few years, spearheaded by groups like Shariah4Holland, Behind Bars, Millatu Ibrahim and Islam4UK. They provide an environment in which ideas about violence and jihad are allowed to develop; their supporters make no secret of their sympathy for Al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden, and have become more and more open in their expression of a jihadist ideology.

Many of the young Muslims attracted to the Syrian conflict come from one of these activist groups. As such, they have crossed the line from rhetoric to action. Effectively, the organisations have thus become actual jihadist networks with their core members fighting in Syria and, at home, a wider group of supporters engaged in ever more fervent propaganda. Social media are used to disseminate stories about "brothers" on the front line in Al Sham (Syria) and the deaths of their "martyrs".

But it is not only pro-jihad Muslims in the Netherlands who have been affected by events in Syria. Throughout Europe and the Middle East, traditional Salafism has had to decide what stance to take. The proselytizing salafist "dawah" ("call to Islam") movements active in Europe and the Muslim world are

highly anti-democratic and anti-Western by nature, but in recent decades have clearly distanced themselves from international jihad of the kind propagated by Al-Qaeda, particularly against the West. On the other hand, they take a far more positive attitude towards what they regard as defensive jihad against "infidel" dictators in the Islamic world itself, against the supposed advance of Shi'ism and against Western occupation of "Muslim lands".

In the Netherlands, both dawahists and moderate Muslim leaders have spoken out regularly against participation in the struggle in Syria. This has brought them strong rebuttals from the jihadist camp, worded in ever more hostile terms. As a result, the broad resistance to violent jihad observed by the AIVD within the Dutch Muslim community in recent years has been somewhat eroded.

#### **1.1.2** Revival of jihadism and Al-Qaeda in North Africa and the Middle East

The growing prominence of jihadists in the Syrian civil war forms part of a broader revival of their ideology throughout the Middle East and North Africa in the wake of the so-called Arab Spring. Until relatively recently, core Al-Qaeda had played no significant role in the uprisings in the Arab world. The conflict in Syria, however, finally provided it with an opportunity to demonstrate its renewed relevance as a leading force in the struggle against the "infidels". First among them are still United States, Israel and their allies, but the alawite-led regime in Damascus was easily added to the list. Syria has become important to Al-Qaeda not only for the fight against President Assad, but also as a potential location for its longed-for Caliphate and base for attacks elsewhere.

The presence of jihadist fighters from Europe in the ranks of groups affiliated or associated with Al-Qaeda, such as ISIL and JaN, offers it a chance to deploy battle-hardened operatives in countries like the Netherlands as well as in Syria. Most hold a European passport and have their origins in our region, making them unlikely to attract much attention once they return and so ideal to carry out or facilitate assignments on behalf of the organisation.

Outside Syria, too, alliances of groups, networks and individuals with links to Al-Qaeda have been coalescing. Since the Arab Spring, jihadists have had much more room to organise in the Middle East and North Africa. Many of the deposed regimes suppressed jihadism, but that pressure has now relaxed or – as in Libya – disappeared altogether. As a result, old networks have been revived and new structures established. They are in contact with radical Muslims in Europe, some of whom have travelled to the region to join them.

After the fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya, it became possible for jihadists to move almost unhindered across an immense area. Stocks of arms from the Libyan army have fallen into their hands. Geographically, an unbroken link has been established from Mali, through Libya, to Egypt, with connected routes extending to Somalia, the Gaza Strip, the Sinai peninsula and beyond. Weapons and other goods find their way to areas where they are needed by jihadists along ancient caravan and smuggling routes across almost uncontrollable desert. It is also relatively easy for jihadists themselves to travel from Mali, say, all the way to Yemen or Syria.

Despite the success French troops have had against the various jihadist groups in Mali, they continue to pose a threat

throughout the greater Sahel region. They have plenty of room there to regroup, rearm, train and prepare attacks.

Aided by the political situation and modern means of communication, jihadist networks and groups are increasingly able to collaborate. Much of their joint effort at present is directed towards support for the struggle in Syria, providing personnel, money, weapons and supplies. Networks of facilitators operate out of the Gulf region, Pakistan, North Africa and Turkey.

#### **1.1.3** Activities and results

Over the past year the AIVD has intensified its investigations into developments in the Middle East and Africa, and particularly their specific repercussions for the Netherlands: radicalisation, travel to take part in jihad and so on. The service has gathered intelligence about individual departing and returning fighters, and also investigated the trends in this general phenomenon. Police Regional Intelligence Units (Regionale Inlichtingendienst, RIDs) have played an important role at the local and regional levels, identifying instances of radicalisation and persons with plans to join the jihad at an early stage.

The issue of fighters departing for and returning from Syria, especially, is a complicated one. Whilst they do pose a clear potential threat, that certainly does not mean that every returnee is going to become a terrorist. A case-by-case approach is therefore required. In 2013 the AIVD supplied the Dutch government and national and local authorities with information and know-how to help them form policy related to those leaving for and returning from the jihad, and to take

appropriate action when necessary. The service also contributed towards the development of an integrated approach to counter the potential threat at the national and local levels.

By means of official reports, the AIVD enabled the Public Prosecution Service to initiate criminal investigations into probable facilitation activities. As a result of information shared with the Child Care and Protection Board (Raad voor de Kinderbescherming), a number of minors were prevented from leaving the country. Local authorities were notified and informed about returning fighters, which in many cases resulted in intensive monitoring and administrative measures. This approach is overseen by the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV), who supervises and advises the parties concerned on how to prevent individuals from radicalising further, departing for a conflict zone or mobilising others.

With a view to the possible knock-on effects of the Syrian conflict for other countries in the region, the AIVD has maintained its intelligence position in respect of North Africa and the Middle East. Based upon current threat information supplied by the service, the Dutch government was able to implement appropriate security measures in good time. These included additional precautions for air traffic overflying the Sinai peninsula and for Dutch diplomatic missions in high-risk locations. The AIVD's intelligence position also contributed towards accurate assessment of the threat posed by jihadists returning to the Netherlands.

## **1.2** Regional and global political developments resulting from the conflict in Syria

As well as a direct jihadist threat, the conflict is Syria is also creating other problems. In particular, it has soured international relations in the Middle East and beyond. This has a potentially destabilising effect. A number of developments, including some which are ongoing, are considered by the AIVD as highly relevant to international security. These include the relationships between different governments in the region and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and the deep gulf between Sunnis and Shi'ites in the Muslim world. Other causes of concern are the dismantling of Syria's stocks of chemical weapons and changing relationships between the major Arab states, and between them and the West.

#### Relationships with the Muslim Brotherhood

Most notably in Egypt, but also in other Arab countries, governments have been reigning in the influence of the Muslim Brotherhood and associated movements. The Palestinian group Hamas, which is closely related to the MB, has become further isolated since the fall of the MB government in Egypt. In Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the Brotherhood has not been tolerated for some time already. The Saudis are also trying to keep the MB's role in Syria to a minimum; Qatar, on the other hand, actively supports its activities there. Both countries are attempting to place people of their own choosing in senior positions in the Syrian opposition coalition and interim government, and both are supplying money and weapons to groups fighting in the country.

#### **Exploitation of Sunni-Shia discord**

The sometimes fierce strife between Sunni and Shi'ite Muslims is being used by various countries in the region to advance their own political and security interests and to expand their sphere of influence. In particular, the Sunni Gulf states have been exploiting the civil war in Syria to leverage a struggle for power with their Shi'ite rival, Iran. Sunni nations including Saudi Arabia are supporting the Syrian opposition in its fight against the Assad regime, which is backed by Iran and the Lebanese Shi'ite movement Hezbollah.

All of this has significant repercussions for internal relations within other Arab countries. In Lebanon, for example, the spectre of a new civil war has reared its head, a fear stoked by a series of terrorist attacks. Christian minorities across the region are being forced to take sides, making them scapegoats for opponents and increasing their vulnerability. Various embattled movements, the Muslim Brotherhood included, have their own reasons for wanting to protect themselves. As the battle lines are drawn, recourse to violence cannot be ruled out. And it is quite possible that Western individuals, property and interests will be among its targets.

#### Changes to regional and international relations

Another consequence of the civil war in Syria is that it has altered international relations in the region in a broader sense. A number of countries in the Middle East, such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey, have adopted their own strongly anti-Assad stance and criticised the reluctance of the United States and the European Union to become more involved. Iran, on the other hand, supports the regime both directly and indirectly, through Hezbollah in Lebanon.

Syria's accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) somewhat reduced Western pressure on Damascus. Thanks to its mediating role, Russia's position in the region has strengthened. The Gulf States have also been endeavouring to increase their political influence, by distributing huge sums of money.

The interim agreement on Iran's nuclear weapons programme, signed in November 2013, has helped to reduce tensions between this country and the West. Moreover, the partial easing of sanctions has reinforced the perception within the region that Iran is now in a stronger position.

All in all, in the past year anti-Western sentiments have grown in the Arab world and the West's influence there has declined.

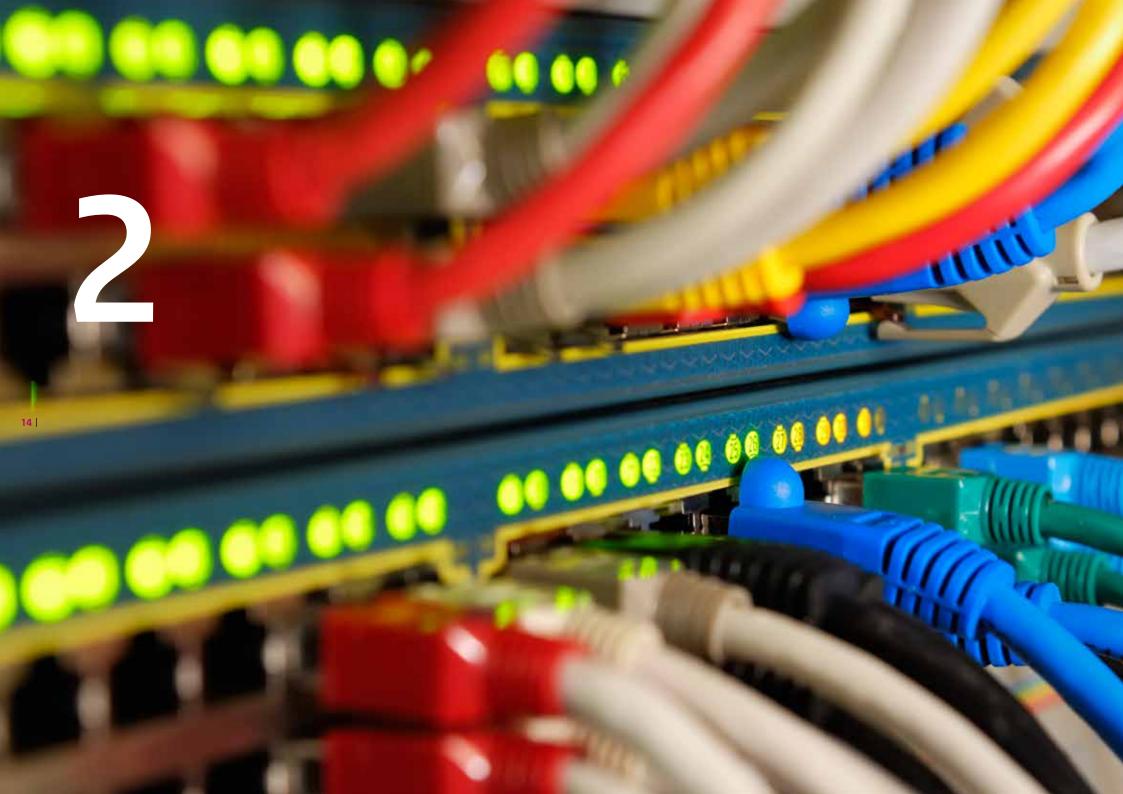
#### Destruction of Syria's stocks of poison gas?

On 21 August 2013, several suburbs of Damascus were attacked with chemical weapons. A United Nations investigation concluded that the substance used was the nerve gas sarin. Massive international political pressure subsequently persuaded Syria to join the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and disclose details of its programme. It is now obliged to destroy its arsenal of these weapons, and their production facilities. In accordance with the schedule drawn up by the OPCW, this process should be completed no later than 30 June 2014.

#### **1.2.1** Activities and results

As the situation in Syria makes clear, domestic security is heavily influenced by developments elsewhere in the world. The conflict itself, its repercussions in the region, the activities of the warring parties and its appeal to some in the Western world all affect the security situation in the Netherlands.

In the last year the AIVD has informed the government about the regional implications of the civil war in Syria and about the threat this poses to Europe. Within the framework of the investigations we perform into the situation in the Middle-East and North-Africa, we frequently consult and attune our results with the Military Intelligence and Security Service (MIVD). The AIVD and MIVD Joint Counterproliferation Unit has continuously kept the government abreast of all developments concerning the chemical weapons in Syria. The AIVD has given presentations and briefings to the ministers concerned in the Council for the Intelligence and Security Services (RIV), to the Intelligence and Security Services Committee in the House of Representatives (CIVD), to the permanent parliamentary committee of Foreign Affairs and to the senior officials concerned. This enabled the government to base its policies on its own intelligence.



## DIGITISATION AND ESPIONAGE: THREATS TO NATIONAL SECURITY AND THE ECONOMY

The digital world presents countless possibilities, and in many respects it makes our daily lives easier and more efficient. However, it also has a downside. It is becoming increasingly clear that our dependence upon technology has huge implications for our privacy, security and economic well-being. The intensive use and far-reaching interconnectivity of digital applications for communications, data storage and administrative processes, by both government and the commercial sector, increases opportunities for sabotage and espionage in this field, and exacerbates their potential impact.

The Netherlands is particularly vulnerable to digital attacks because of its advanced information and communications technology (ICT) infrastructure and high density of coverage. Our nation has one of the world's highest percentages of computers per households and is a leader in the use of innovative digital services. It is also home to one of the biggest internet hubs on earth. And our vulnerability is only expected to keep growing as ICT becomes even more important to the functioning of our economy and society.

The AIVD investigates the threats and vulnerabilities associated with digitisation, as they affect the security of both the Dutch state and the public domain, and shares its findings with government agencies and private companies so that they are better able to take preventive measures.

## **2.1** More digital espionage, greater diversity

The AIVD has observed a substantial increase in the number of incidents of digital espionage over the years, and also that they are gaining in complexity and impact. The global spread of the internet, and our dependence upon it to create, disseminate and store data, have added new dimensions to this activity.

Digital espionage is relatively cheap and easy to carry out, the risk of interception is low and the potential yield is exceptionally high. As a result, it is no longer the exclusive province of large, advanced intelligence organisations; almost all services have invested in digital capability in recent years. Moreover, the ease with which this form of espionage can be undertaken has brought it within reach of organisations and even individuals seeking to gather information about governments, companies or people for financial, political or ideological reasons. The threat has therefore diversified considerably.

#### **2.1.1** Targets

Globally, government bodies, businesses and individuals in many countries have become victims of digital espionage, with confidential state, commercial and personal information compromised on a massive scale.

Most of the digital attacks identified by the AIVD have targeted governmental institutions such as the ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, intergovernmental organisations such as the UN, NATO and the EU and forums like the G8 and G20. They are intended primarily to gather intelligence pertaining to defence, energy, economic and foreign policy. The political think tanks advising governments in these areas have also been targeted on numerous occasions. Other attacks have been designed to intimidate, manipulate or spy on dissident groups and human rights organisations.

The private sector is increasingly under attack. The principal targets here are companies and research institutes active in energy, biotechnology, chemicals and high tech sector, in the Netherlands and elsewhere, with the aim to seize sensitive technical, scientific, financial and economic information. Because they impinge upon intellectual property rights and

undermine bargaining positions during tender processes, contract negotiations, mergers and takeovers, such incidents put the business community at serious risk of suffering commercial harm. Although exact figures are not available, it seems likely that damage caused worldwide runs into hundreds of billions of euros in terms of lost income, jobs and competitiveness, not to mention the cost of security measures and recovery work.

As well as the government and trade and industry, in the Netherlands our advanced ICT infrastructure itself is also a target; it is attacked with a view to exploiting it to facilitate digital espionage and sabotage in other parts of the world. In other words, to act as an unwitting channel for these activities.

#### **2.2** Disruption and sabotage

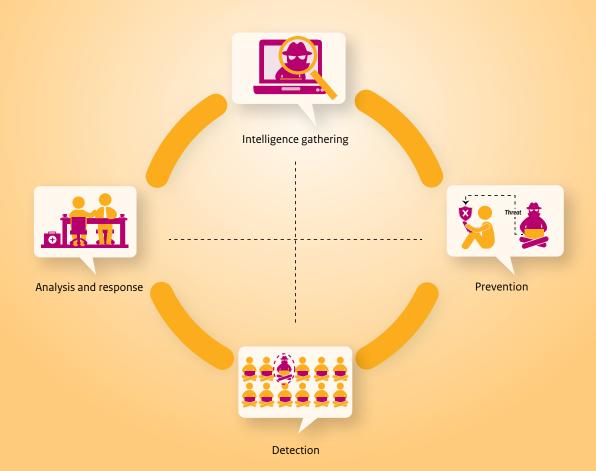
Another aspect of the digital threat which has to be taken very seriously is the risk of sabotage. Past incidents have already shown that this can disrupt and damage vital sectors of the economy. And the impact is immediate.

Even fairly unsophisticated sabotage efforts can have a profound effect, as was demonstrated when various institutions, mostly in the financial sector, were subject to DDoS (Distributed Denial of Service) attacks early in 2013. Their aim is to make a website or internet service inaccessible by overloading it with simultaneous communication requests from a large number of computers. Whilst the 2013 incidents did not cause any social disruption, they did make it clear that a relatively straightforward method can seriously hinder online payment traffic, for example, causing great inconvenience and commotion.

#### AIVD digital espionage analyst

"Since 2013 we have been investigating large-scale digital espionage attacks on companies and institutes in an industry that develops advanced technological applications for commercial and military purposes. Dutch companies are among the targets. The assaults are very well-organised and professional. Unnoticed, the attackers have infiltrated a number of company networks in depth and on a huge scale to gather very specific material. In the process they have managed to obtain large amounts of very valuable technological information and confidential business documents such as blueprints, instruction manuals, project plans and quotes."

Businesses in Europe, Asia and North America have been infiltrated, but Europe has been hit particularly hard. The companies involved are in the top twenty in their industry, with those in Europe alone collectively responsible for more than half of its turnover and jobs. These attacks thus pose a substantial threat to revenues, competitiveness, employment and profitability in this important European sector.



By **gathering intelligence** the AIVD ascertains the intentions and modi operandi of digital attackers. Based on this knowledge the AIVD provides potential targets with suggestions how to prevent attacks or how to **detect** them in an early stage. Any attacks that occur are subsequently **analysed** and the results may alter future **responses** toward potential targets. The analyses also serve to enhance intelligence gathering itself.

Design: VijfKeerBlauw, Rijswijk

#### **2.3** Resilience and security

The threats inherent in the digital world are making it more and more important that electronic data and communications be protected. This is not just about safeguarding state secrets; commercial information and privacy-sensitive personal data are also increasingly vulnerable to attack.

At present, however, too many information systems and users are not sufficiently resilient. Consequently, digital attacks are relatively successful. Moreover, information security measures tend to protect against known methods and hardly against new vulnerabilities regularly discovered in hardware and software. This results in some attacks passing unnoticed, or not being discovered until they are in a well-advanced state. On top of that, many companies and government agencies are reluctant to report incidents or computer virus infections for fear of damage to their reputation and claims from affected customers, shareholders or members of the public. They are also apprehensive about inciting copycat attacks and making unfounded allegations against suspected culprits. However, this reticence deprives other organisations of important threat information, allowing attacks to continue and spread.

To safeguard their ICT systems and data, a basic level of protection and security awareness is a must for every company, government body and individual internet user. For organisations in the public and private sectors alike, it is important to understand both the threat and the systems at risk, and to know what information needs to be protected – especially, the so-called "crown jewels". The loss of small packets of data during a single incident may not be damaging in itself, but the cumulative acquisition of lots of fragments over a

period of time can provide the attacker with a substantial amount of sensitive material about the organisation or its security precautions.

Another area of particular concern is the disclosure of information through social media. More and more personal and corporate data is becoming openly available on the internet, making it easier for foreign intelligence and security services to identify potential targets and to approach them in an "appropriate" way.

#### **2.3.1** Activities and results

Digital espionage and sabotage are important aspects of the AIVD's remit, as is the security of information and communications technology. From its investigations of detected attacks, the service has learnt much about their perpetrators, targets, intentions and methods. These lessons are shared with affected organisations, public and private, and used to improve detection and security. The service is expanding its work in this domain.

The AIVD is a participant in the National Detection Network (Nationaal Detectie Netwerk, NDN), which is co-ordinated by the Ministry of Security and Justice. In this forum, the service works closely with the National Cyber Security Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC) and the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV). The AIVD, the NCSC, the Military Intelligence and Security Service (Militaire Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdienst, MIVD), the National Police Service and the Public Prosecution Service have intensified their collaboration in analysing and countering

online threats to national security, with the so-called Cyber Infobox as a tangible result of this effort. Within this framework, the AIVD focuses upon advanced digital attacks which are difficult for other organisations to recognise. Thanks to its good relationships with partner services abroad, the AIVD is aware of identifying characteristics of sophisticated attacks known only to a limited circle within the international intelligence community.

Our service is striving to strike the ideal balance between prevention and detection, by means of additional monitoring and analysis tools. The aim is that these two activities reinforce one another, with information obtained from detection work used to enhance protective measures at those points where the threat posed by digital espionage exceeds the current level of resilience.

To help organisations understand the threat and how to protect themselves against it, the AIVD gave numerous presentations about cyberattacks and the security of sensitive information during 2013.

Over the past year the service had also provided information about espionage risks in general, for both government bodies and private companies. Here again, the aim is into further increase awareness and to advise on prevention and safeguards.

The AIVD supports the Dutch government in protecting its sensitive information against hostile state actors and other threats. For example, it provides advice on solutions in such areas as secure telephony, data protection and data-traffic security. For more details on this work, see section 3.4.3.

#### **2.4** Classic espionage alive and well

Classic forms of espionage continue to be used widely. Digital techniques have added a new dimension to spying, but the targets and goals are very much the same as ever.

The human aspect of espionage remains hugely important. Even today, not all of the material hostile foreign intelligence services are interested in is available in electronic form. Examples include the personal thoughts of company directors, an investor's particular preferences and the true relationships between members of a political group. Intelligence services use people to gather this kind of information. Moreover, a human source is sometimes needed in order to gain access to computer systems, to find out about their security or to infect them (perhaps unknowingly) with a virus.

In 2013 the AIVD observed the active recruitment and control of agents in the Netherlands by certain foreign services. Counterintelligence work concentrated upon identifying the presence and activities of foreign intelligence officers in this country. In co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this resulted in a number of known operatives being refused visas.

Activities observed in the past year had a variety of goals, including political intelligence-gathering, the acquisition of sensitive technology and the infiltration of immigrant groups. The AIVD's counterintelligence work was not confined to Dutch territory, since citizens of the Netherlands living and working abroad – and government employees in particular – remain targets for foreign services.

#### Security interests and vital sectors

Perhaps the most important part of our vital infrastructure is the telecommunications system, not in the least because all the other vital sectors make use of it. Were the integrity and uninterrupted functioning of this system to be compromised, it would have an almost immediate impact upon national security. After all, communications and data traffic are absolutely crucial to the smooth running of the Dutch economy and our society in general.

#### **2.5** Threats to Dutch economic interests

Both physically and digitally, the Netherlands is a major global economic crossroads. Huge volumes of goods transit the Port of Rotterdam on their way in and out of continental Europe. More than 50 million people pass through Amsterdam Schiphol Airport each year. And the Amsterdam Internet Exchange (AMS-IX) is one of the largest network hubs in the world. All this makes our country an attractive location for international business, and an important stage for economic rivalry.

International competition for raw materials, food supplies, energy and high technology is intensifying all the time. The rise of new economies has shifted the global balance of power. Against this background, the AIVD has observed that some countries are using espionage – in both its traditional and digital forms – to tip the competitive battle in their own favour. Their intelligence services are assigned to gather confidential technical, scientific, financial and economic information, and to gain inside knowledge about forthcoming transactions, takeovers and negotiating positions.

The nations involved are by no means confined to those regarded as our opponents on historical grounds. Today, the use of the intelligence community to benefit a country's own industry, to further its technological and scientific progress and to improve its competitive position in the world market is a threat that can emanate from anywhere.

The more closely a country's political power structures and ambitions at the highest level are bound up with industrial and commercial interests, the more likely it becomes to deploy its intelligence services in pursuit of political, economic and

business objectives. The moment it does so, the level playing field for other participants observing the principles of the free market – be they states or multinational companies – disappears. The economic balance is upset by players with a hidden political power agenda and clandestine state support in the form of activities by the secret services.

One particularly pertinent threat to the economic interests of our nation is loss of control over its vital infrastructure. Large sections of this are owned or managed by private companies – power generators and grid operators, for example, and telecommunications firms – which can be traded on the open market and so could fall into the hands of parties – states or businesses – over which the Dutch government has no authority, even though it is responsible for the proper functioning of our society and a stable economy.

#### **2.5.1** Activities and results

In the cases of several players in the global market, the AIVD has clarified the ties linking political power structures with industrial and commercial interests. By revealing the underlying intentions and ambitions of parties with which Dutch government bodies and companies enter into economic relationships, the service has shown how these parties seek to upset the level playing field and thereby equipping their Dutch opposite numbers to resist that effort.

In 2013 the AIVD issued a number of intelligence reports and analyses elucidating the true motivations behind certain foreign state and non-state initiatives in the economic domain. The service also advised relevant parties on the security implications of sensitive economic relationships and transactions.

As regards vital infrastructure in the Netherlands, the AIVD provided alerts and advice concerning possible loss of state control and authority. In this respect, it concentrated upon the twelve government-designated sections of that infrastructure in which a loss of control and authority could pose a threat to national economic security.



## OTHER AREAS OF INTEREST

The first two chapters of this report have discussed two areas of particular interest to the AIVD in 2013 in some detail: the security implications of the current unrest and instability in the Middle East and North Africa, and threats – digital and otherwise – to national security and the Dutch economy. This chapter looks at other aspects of the service's work during the past year.

#### **3.1** Foreign intelligence

The AIVD gathers political intelligence – information about the political intentions, activities and opinions of governments, institutions and people – in respect of a number of specific countries and regions in those countries. In so doing, the service tries to discover the true motives of the leading regional or national actors, what real influence the government has and what aims are being pursued.

These activities are governed by the so-called Foreign Intelligence Designation Order (Aanwijzingsbesluit Buitenland), which outlines the principal questions the Dutch government wants the AIVD to investigate. Signed by the Prime Minister, the Designation Order is a secret document. If the service were to describe its activities abroad in any detail, that would reveal too much about the subjects of its investigations and the underlying government requirements. It would also endanger sources and other individuals the AIVD works with in fulfilling this task. And it could harm diplomatic relations.

For those reasons, this report does not describe foreign intelligence activities at any length. But that does not mean that the service is not accountable for them; the parliamentary Intelligence and Security Services Committee (Commissie voor de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, CIVD) is informed about investigations undertaken in pursuance of the Designation Order.

This work is carried out in close co-operation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, to ensure a minimum of overlap with the activities of the Diplomatic Service. AIVD reports are supposed to complement those prepared by the ministry, which can use the information they contain to help formulate Dutch foreign policy and determine the country's position in international negotiations. The AIVD and the MIVD collaborate where investigation areas from their respective Designation Orders overlap.

The foreign intelligence remit is closely linked to the other tasks entrusted to the AIVD. For example, an in-depth knowledge of events in the Middle East and North Africa is essential to the thorough investigation of Dutch citizens taking part in armed conflicts in the region and to a good understanding of what motivates them. As indicated in the first chapter of this report, counterterrorism work and foreign intelligence activities are extensions of one another.

Foreign intelligence also contributes to investigations into the threat posed to the Netherlands by other states. This applies equally to traditional forms of espionage as to its "modern" variants, like digital espionage. In this respect, there is also common ground with Dutch economic security interests. Information about the economic intentions of other countries provides an insight into the underlying motives of those seeking, directly or indirectly, to damage our interests.

The need for more intensive investigation of persons travelling to the Middle East to join the jihad there meant that a certain amount of capacity was transferred to the teams responsible during the course of 2013. As a result, some aspects of foreign intelligence work were suspended or adjusted.

#### **3.1.1** Activities and results

The AIVD produced more than 400 intelligence products related to countries covered by the Designation Order in 2013. These included intelligence reports, more detailed analyses, official reports and responses to requests for information (RFIs) from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, NATO and the European Union. In addition, the service delivered presentations at regular meetings of the Netherlands Joint Intelligence Services Committee (Comité Verenigde Inlichtingendiensten Nederland, CVIN) and the Council for the Intelligence and Security Services (Raad voor de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, RIV). And numerous specific briefings and presentations about international developments were given to the parliamentary Intelligence and Security Services Committee (Commissie voor de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, CIVD) and to individual members of the CIVD and RIV. to ministers and to civil servants with policy responsibility.

#### **3.2** Proliferation

The Netherlands is a signatory to the system of international treaties designed to counter the proliferation of nuclear weapons and associated technologies, nuclear testing and the development and production of biological and chemical weapons. The AIVD and its military counterpart, the MIVD, conduct investigations into nations suspected of developing or possessing weapons of mass destruction in contravention of those treaties. These are known as "countries of concern".

This task is carried out by the two services' joint Counterproliferation Unit (Unit Contraproliferatie, UCP); its work provides the Dutch government with an autonomous intelligence position concerning developments in that domain. The UCP also endeavours to frustrate procurement activities by or on behalf of countries of concern.

#### **3.2.1** Activities and results

In the counterproliferation domain, 2013 saw the interception of several shipments of sensitive goods. The UCP works closely with official partners such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Customs and the Fiscal Information and Investigation Service (Fiscale inlichtingen- en opsporingsdienst, FIOD), as well as with partner services abroad. In 2013 the unit submitted 30 official reports to the ministry in support of its enforcement of export control policy. And UCP representatives visited several institutions and companies to notify them of specific proliferation risks.

#### **3.2.2** Latin America and the Caribbean

The AIVD and MIVD form a team to provide the government with intelligence and background information concerning developments of significance to Latin America and the Caribbean region, and to Dutch interests there. For the MIVD, the permanent presence of Dutch troops in the Caribbean is reason enough to monitor events there in broad terms, insofar as they might affect our forces. With the islands of Sint Eustatius, Saba and Bonaire now special municipalities of the Netherlands, our nation's borders extend to the very fringes of Latin America.

#### **3.3** Activism and extremism

Because of the nature of its activities and the number of participants, left-wing extremism has a greater impact than its right-wing equivalent; the far right in the Netherlands remains a splintered and marginal force.

On the extremist left, the past few years have seen increasing collaboration between activists inspired by different causes, in 2013 especially on resisting asylum and immigration policy.

#### **3.3.1** Intimidating and violent opposition to asylum and immigration policy

Resistance against Dutch – and European – asylum and immigration policy has been intensifying for some years now. Activists and extremists across the continent have joined forces under the umbrella of the No Border Network; with the recent establishment of a Dutch arm of this organisation, activity increased in 2013 but at the same time tempered. This was particularly apparent during the No Border Camp event in Rotterdam in August, at which extremists were held in check by an overwhelming majority of moderate activists.

On other occasions, however, more extreme forms of protest did take place in 2013. These included attempts to intimidate politicians and senior public officials associated with asylum and immigration policy. The offices of a political party were daubed with graffiti and the head of the Immigration and Naturalisation Service (Immigratie- en Naturalisatiedienst, IND) suffered personal threats and daubing at his home. A construction site run by a firm involved in building housing for

asylum seekers was subjected to an arson attack and property damage. Deportations were thwarted by "warnings" to airlines and by instructing prospective deportees in resistant behaviour.

#### **3.3.2** Animal rights extremism

There were more demonstrations against perceived animal suffering in 2013 than in previous years, but their tone seemed somewhat milder. Attendance increased at protests organised by Respect for Animals (Respect voor Dieren, RvD) to oppose the shipment by Air France-KLM of monkeys for use in animal testing. The same applied to the activities of the Coalition Against Animal Testing (Anti Dierproeven Coalitie, ADC), which tries to conduct its protests in a legal manner and rejects intimidatory and violent behaviour in order not to damage its image.

Dutch animal rights extremists play a leading role in the European movement, as confirmed by the organisational prominence of RvD – or individuals from it – in the annual International Animal Rights Gathering, held last year in Belgium.

#### **3.3.3** Other forms of left-wing extremism

"International solidarity" was the principal focus of activity in 2013 for so-called anarcho-extremists, whose opposition to perceived injustice in society is derived from an anarchist ideology. A section of this movement prepared and took part in protests against the G8 in London and the European Central Bank in Frankfurt. As well as supporting and participating in extremist activities, their "international solidarity" also extended to financial backing for like-minded groups in other countries, among them Greece.

Anti-Fascist Action (Antifascistische Actie, AFA) concentrated mainly upon supporting resistance against asylum and immigration policy. Certain individuals within this group continued to exploit the Freedom of Information Act (Wet Openbaarheid van Bestuur, WOB) as an additional source of income; by submitting elaborate requests in bulk, they bank on the recipient institution being unable to process them within the statutory deadline and so forcing it to pay compensation.¹ AFA also financed some of its own activities in this way in 2013. Since the technique was exposed, a political debate has arisen about the possible repeal of the WOB.

#### **3.3.4** Right-wing extremism

There were no major right-wing extremist events in 2013. A few well-known figures from this scene exploited a Party for Freedom (Partij voor de Vrijheid, PVV) demonstration against the government in September to draw attention to their own group. And a new faction called Identity Resistance (Identitair Verzet), consisting mainly of familiar faces from the extreme right, attracted some publicity with a number of activities. The AIVD foresees no significant change to the threat picture in 2014; right-wing extremism in the Netherlands is set to remain a marginal phenomenon, presenting little or no danger.

<sup>1</sup> See the article "Milking the WOB", (WOB als melkkoe) in Binnenlands Bestuur, 19 February 2010.

#### **3.3.5** Moluccan activism

The principal purpose of activities by the government in exile of the Republic of the South Moluccas (Republik Maluku Selatan, RMS) is to gain publicity. Although it caused some disquiet in the media, the publication in 2013 of an official report on the ending of the 1977 train hijack by Moluccan terrorists at De Punt did not prompt the government in exile to take any action. It appeared to be concentrating upon the organisation of a political seminar to be held in the Moluccas. No significant change in Moluccan activism is predicted in 2014.

#### **3.3.6** Activities and results

From the intelligence and background information it gathers the AIVD briefed the responsible authorities about the possible intimidatory or violent activities by left-wing extremists. The service has observed a widening gulf between moderate and extreme activists, which might lead more autonomous activity by committed extremists, such as "home visits" and to increase in harsher action, such as large-scale destruction of property and arson.

Abroad, notably in the United Kingdom and Poland, we have seen cases of extremists infiltrating peaceful local initiatives and introducing more radical forms of activity. A similar scenario is conceivable in relation to other protest themes, such as opposition to conventional gas production in the province of Groningen.

In 2013 the AIVD published a wide-ranging report entitled "Left-wing activism and extremism: a multi-faceted, volatile and fickle phenomenon" (Links-activisme en –extremisme, divers en diffuus, wisselvallig en wispelturig).

The service exchanges intelligence and background information about developments on the extreme right with partners at home and abroad. This has helped to clarify and to correctly assess activities in that domain.

By keeping the government informed and up-to-date in respect of Moluccan activism, the AIVD has contributed towards an appropriate official response at times of potential tension and unrest.

#### **3.4** Separatist and revolutionary groups

The AIVD investigates politically motivated and separatist groups active in Europe, including the Netherlands. One example is the Kurdistan Workers' Party (Partiya Karkerên Kurdistan, PKK), which organises clandestine activities in support of its armed struggle in Turkey for Kurdish independence. Acting on an official report from the AIVD, late in 2012 the National Criminal Investigation Service (National Recherche) raided a PKK gathering at Ellemeet in the province of Zeeland. The organisation recovered from this setback in 2013 and remains active in the Netherlands and other parts of Europe.

The Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (Devrimci Halk Kurtuluş Partisi/Cephesi, DHKP/C) is a Marxist-Leninist terrorist organisation which targets the Turkish government,

the United States and NATO. It claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing at the US embassy in Ankara in February 2013 and is currently profiling itself more and more emphatically as being pro-Assad in the conflict in Syria. The AIVD has established that the DHKP/C is using the Netherlands as a base for its activities in Europe and Turkey, and so intensified its investigations into the group in 2013. No change to the organisation's profile is expected in the coming year.

#### **3.4.1** Activities and results

In monitoring the PKK, in 2013 the AIVD observed that it continues to recruit for its armed struggle. Kurds mustered in the Netherlands are also taking part in the conflict in Syria.

Investigation of the DHKP/C has been stepped up. Because of the movement's international nature the AIVD works with partner services abroad in this effort. The Dutch government has been briefed on its pro-Assad stance.

#### **3.5** Security promotion

The AIVD's security remit involves providing third parties with knowledge, expertise and information to enable them to bring their own safety and security precautions up to the necessary level and to maintain them there. These activities focus upon issues of vital importance to national security and the Dutch economy, from political secrets to valuable innovative knowhow. Most of the threat-related details shared by the service are acquired during intelligence investigations.

Many of the recipients are government organisations, but they also include sections of the business community that are vital to the proper functioning of our society, such as power suppliers and telecommunications network operators.

#### **3.5.1** Threats to the national security domain

One specific "target group" for security-promoting measures encompasses people, property, services and events for which the Dutch state bears a particular responsibility. They include members of the government, embassies and visiting heads of state, and also occasions such as King's Day. Collectively, these subjects are referred to as the "national security domain".

#### Major events: Abdication and Nuclear Security Summit

The abdication of Queen Beatrix and investiture of King Willem-Alexander on 30 April 2013 was a major occasion of national importance. The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in The Hague in March 2014 was another major international gathering. It is absolutely vital that such events pass off safely and undisrupted.

#### Threats against politicians

Political officeholders should be able to perform their duties in safety and without hindrance. However, it is not is not uncommon for them to receive threats in the form intimidating e-mails, letters and tweets. One example is the campaign by extremist opponents of Dutch asylum and immigration policy, targeting the minister of state responsible, senior civil servants and those charged with carrying out this policy (see section 3.2.1).

#### Threats against diplomatic property and international organisations

As host nation, the Netherlands is responsible for the safe and uninterrupted functioning of the diplomatic missions and international tribunals and courts located on our territory. In the light of developments elsewhere in the world, the AIVD believes that, compared with past years, the level of threat to some of these establishments has increased. Those most at risk represent countries and institutions in some way associated with conflict situations.

#### **3.5.2** Activities and results

The AIVD provides the national Safety and Security Co-ordinator (Coördinator Bewaking en Beveiliging, CBB) with information detailing both known and conceivable threats, so that he can take appropriate action within the framework of the so-called Safety and Security System (Stelsel Bewaken en Beveiligen, SBB).<sup>2</sup> In 2013 the service submitted 79 threat assessments, 31 threat analyses, 2 risk analyses and 16 reports.

In advance of the abdication and investiture, the AIVD issued two comprehensive threat analyses. Other events of national importance covered by analyses of this kind included Remembrance Day, Veterans' Day and Budget Day. With regard to the NSS, the service has been taking part in the preparations since 2012. Among its contributions are threat analyses detailing potential dangers to the summit and its participants.

Based upon information obtained from the AIVD, the CBB has taken decisions concerning the personal protection of politicians.

#### **3.5.3** Security of vital sectors

Major service failures in vital sectors like energy supply, telecommunications, financial traffic and civil aviation could seriously disorder Dutch society and the national economy. The AIVD therefore actively encourages the parties responsible, be they public bodies or private organisations, to take appropriate security measures.

#### **3.5.4** Activities and results

The service further reinforced its collaboration and exchanges of information with vital sectors in 2013, in order to provide relevant organisations with means to help maintain, and as necessary improve, their resilience to impairment of their operations. Emergency scenarios were developed in conjunction with public and private actors in the electricity and gas sectors, industries in which any major service failure would have an immediate and highly disruptive impact upon other vital sectors and society as a whole.

In decisions affecting control over vital infrastructure and access to key knowledge and information, maintaining national security is a decisive factor. The AIVD plays an advisory role in this respect.

<sup>2</sup> A partnership of the AIVD, the MIVD, the National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV) and the National Branch of the National Police Service to protect people, property and services in the national security domain.

In civil aviation, too, the service supplied various parties with information and advice in 2013. Incidents in the sector were clarified and details were provided about methods used by terrorists, including new tactics. Additionally, the NCTV, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and airlines were informed about the threat to air traffic overflying the Sinai peninsula (see section 1.1.3).

#### Account manager civil aviation:

"In 2013 we have provided training for private and government parties within civil aviation. This sector remains vulnerable to terrorist threat. These trainings were meant to raise threat awareness among aviation crew and ground personnel. We have also developed a separate series of trainings to inform ground and security personnel about jihadists travelling to Syria. We hope that this will increase the chances of these travellers being noticed and stopped at the airport."

Finally, threat analyses from the AIVD contribute towards the Counterterrorism Alert System (Alertingssysteem Terrorisme-bestrijding, ATb) for the government and business community. Operated by the NCTV, this is designed to warn relevant sectors and services about actual or conceivable terrorist threats.

#### **3.5.5** Security of sensitive information

The Dutch government must be in a position to protect its confidential information from hostile state actors and other eavesdroppers. To this end, the AIVD provides it with impartial advice on ICT security solutions suitable for the protection of

state secrets. The service's own National Signals Security Bureau (Nationaal Bureau voor Verbindingsbeveiliging, NBV) possesses unique knowledge and expertise in this field, and also makes use of information drawn from its extensive international network.

The AIVD advises the government about protective measures, and on how to detect and respond to breaches of security. On request, the service also evaluates security products before they enter service; this work improves government resilience in the digital world and supports its risk management activities. Thanks to AIVD advice, ministries and the government-wide ICT service centres are better able to safeguard their national, physical, economic and political interests.

Until recently, duties of the service included the prevention and investigation of information leaks from government computer systems through electromagnetic radiation. These are known as NECOM tasks. It also advised and supported the national "TEMPEST" industry, developing safeguards in this domain. Due to budget cuts, however, in 2013 it was decided to terminate these activities. Some duties will be transferred to third parties.

#### **3.5.6** Activities and results

#### Safety product evaluations

The Dutch government needs secure mobile communications. For this purpose, in 2013 the AIVD approved the Sectra Tiger 7401 handset for telephony up to "Secret" (Stg. Geheim) level. The government now intends to supply ministers and senior civil servants with this device.

For telephony and text messaging on Android smartphones, up to "Ministerial Restricted" (Departementaal Vertrouwelijk) level, the AIVD has approved the Panthon3 solution. This is an app allowing officials in a variety of domains, such as central government, local authorities and the police, to communicate safely with one another.

To facilitate secure communication over untrusted open networks, in 2013 the service completed an evaluation of the cryptographic network component Sina Redfox. The results were positive, with the tool found suitable for use up to "Secret" level to establish a cryptographically isolated infrastructure for the interconnection of classified networks.

#### Government security advice

In 2013 the AIVD advised various branches of central government on security issues related to the establishment and configuration of digital information systems and the protection of sensitive data. For example, the service contributed actively to development of the section of the Government Digital Working Environment (Digitale Werkomgeving Rijksdienst) in which classified information is processed. It also compiled a risk analysis for the Government AppStore (Rijksoverheid AppStore) project, focusing upon the secure distribution of apps to mobile devices in the public service. In partnership with the National Cyber Security Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC) and the Government Accountancy Service (Accountantsdienst Rijk), a guide to audits of cloud infrastructures was compiled. Finally, to raise awareness of the risks and threats associated with the security of sensitive information, presentations were organised for audiences including the Cabinet and both houses of Parliament.

#### Regulation and inspection

The AIVD is the designated national security authority for the protection of classified NATO and EU information held by the Dutch government – with the exception of the Ministry of Defence – and private companies in the Netherlands. In this capacity, the service accompanied NATO and EU representatives during their regular inspections in the country in 2013.

#### Cryptokey production

The AIVD produces keys for the Dutch government's cryptographic equipment. In 2013 the service assisted in the introduction of a digital system for the distribution and management of cryptokey material for national and NATO signals traffic.

## **3.6** Positions involving confidentiality and security screening

The AIVD is responsible for the security screening of persons holding or appointed to "positions involving confidentiality" (vertrouwensfuncties) in central government, vital sectors, civil aviation and other sensitive areas. These are posts in which abuse of office might seriously harm national security or the interests of the state. Screening is designed to reveal any vulnerabilities that could affect or compromise an individual's ability to hold such a position with integrity.

A person cannot take up a position involving confidentiality until the AIVD has granted them a Security Clearance (Verklaring van Geen Bezwaar, VGB).

Two developments in this area were of particular importance to the AIVD in 2013. First, the conditions for the designation of positions involving confidentiality and the screening process were reviewed and "realigned". Second, the cost of screening for government posts is now charged to the department concerned.

#### Realignment

As a result of the changes to the screening process, the AIVD is now more specific in relating the vulnerabilities inherent in a particular position to the personal circumstances of its holder or appointee.

Meanwhile, new guidelines have been drawn up to provide clear criteria for the designation of positions involving confidentiality. Individual ministers can now use these to designate relevant posts in their own domain. In addition, risk profiles have been developed to assess the potential damage to national security arising out of abuse of a given position.

#### Charging

Since 1 January 2013, the costs associated with security screening for the public sector have been passed on to the employers concerned. During the first year of this arrangement, the AIVD billed a total of more than € 5.7 million. The ministers of the Interior and Defence have now tabled a parliamentary bill to introduce a similar charging scheme for the private sector.

#### **3.6.1** Activities and results

In total, almost 34,000 security screenings were conducted in 2013 by the AIVD and the mandated organisations to which it delegates this task in some domains: the National Police

Service, the Royal and Diplomatic Protection Service (Dienst Koninklijke en Diplomatieke Beveiliging, DKDB) and the Royal Military Constabulary (Koninklijke Marechaussee, KMar). In just over 700 cases, most (693) in the civil aviation sector, they resulted in Security Clearance being denied or withdrawn.

The AIVD itself performed almost 5600 screenings. With nearly 93 per cent of these completed within the statutory period of eight weeks, the service exceeded its agreed target of 90 per cent (see Chapter 5 for full details).

#### **3.7** Special inquiries

The AIVD is empowered to investigate the background of an individual holding or likely to take up a position with the potential to substantially undermine the integrity of the public service or the royal family. In 2013 the Intelligence and Security Services Regulatory Commission (Commissie van Toezicht betreffende de Inlichtingen- en Veiligheidsdiensten, CTIVD) was reviewing the service's approach to the provision of information arising out of these special inquiries. [LINK] It recommended that the procedure be explicitly enshrined in law, and a provision to that effect is to be included in the next round of amendments to the Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wet op de inlichtingen- en veiligheidsdiensten, Wiv 2002).



## CO-OPERATION AND ORGANISATION

One of the AIVD's strategic priorities for 2013 was to intensify co-operation with partner organisations, both domestic and international. The complexities of the threats we face make this essential. To keep the Netherlands safe, the AIVD needs partners. And they need the AIVD.

#### **4.1** Domestic co-operation

#### 4.1.1 MIVD

The AIVD and the MIVD, its military counterpart, are acting together in more and more areas of common interest. The evolving threat situation, with increasing digitisation and internationalisation, makes a joint approach absolutely vital. Combining the two services' expertise not only adds value,

it also improves efficiency. The AIVD and the MIVD make use of each other's intelligence information to produce more complete reports. In 2013 it was decided that senior representatives from each organisation will attend the other's management meetings so that they can better co-ordinate policymaking and activities.

#### **Joint Sigint Cyber Unit**

The new Joint Sigint Cyber Unit (JSCU), responsible for the acquisition, clarification and processing of signals intelligence (sigint) and cyberdata for both services, is a good example of their close relationship. All being well, the unit should become operational in the spring of 2014. Even before its official inauguration, a start was made in 2013 with the joint organisation of information exchanges and collaborative activities with foreign partner services in its area of responsibility.

A large proportion of the AIVD's 2013 technological innovation budget was assigned to the establishment of the JSCU. Together with the MIVD, the service is now working to secure medium and long-term investment in sigint and cyber activities. The outcome of this effort will depend in part upon the results of the parliamentary debate on the recently published Dessens Report on the workings of the 2002 Intelligence and Security Services Act (Wet op de inlichtingenen veiligheidsdiensten, Wiv 2002).

#### 4.1.2 NCTV

The National Co-ordinator for Counterterrorism and Security (Nationaal Coördinator Terrorismebestrijding en Veiligheid, NCTV) is one of the AIVD's key strategic partners. The collaboration covers a variety of fields, including combating and preventing terrorism, radicalisation and extremism, as well as the promotion of effective security precautions. Essentially, the AIVD gathers the intelligence which enables the NCTV to take appropriate action in the public domain.

The most important areas of co-operation in 2013 were dealing with jihadists travelling to and returning from Syria and developments in the field of cyberthreats.

#### Travel to Syria

Described at length in Chapter 1, the issue of Dutch jihadists in Syria requires intensive intelligence work and dedicated action by national and local authorities targeting those leaving for and returning from the conflict area. The AIVD and NCTV work very closely together in this field. The AIVD gathers intelligence about the individuals involved, and on overall trends in the phenomenon, which is distilled into information the service can

share with its national and local partners. They include local authorities, the Public Prosecution Service and the Child Care and Protection Board (Raad voor de Kinderbescherming). The NCTV brings these and other relevant parties together to advise them on and to oversee the implementation of measures to prevent individuals from radicalising further, departing for the conflict zone or mobilising others. It also helps them to deal effectively with returnees (see also section 1.1.3).

#### Cyber security

The AIVD collaborates intensively with the National Cyber Security Centre (Nationaal Cyber Security Centrum, NCSC), which falls under the auspices of the NCTV. The service makes a substantial contribution to the "Netherlands Cyber Security Overview" (Cybersecuritybeeld Nederland), a document prepared annually by the NCSC. The centre also co-ordinated the compilation of the "National Cyber Security Strategy 2.0", with input from the AIVD and numerous other contributors, both public and private.

To expose attacks on digital networks, the AIVD and NCSC have worked closely together on the pilot for a National Detection Network. For this the AIVD has supplied technical knowledge and insights of its own, and material shared by partner services, much of which is not yet known to the commercial IT security industry.

#### **4.1.3** Regional intelligence units and special teams

The National Police Service, the Netherlands Tax and Customs Administration (Belastingdienst) and the Royal Military Constabulary (Koninklijke Marechaussee, KMar) all have created teams carrying out work on behalf of the AIVD, as

provided for in Article 60 of the Wiv 2002. The service regards these as "forward positions" in intelligence, its eyes and ears across the country, and has been intensifying its collaboration with them for some years now. They have been given a central role in the intelligence process. With that in mind, the AIVD has initiated a quality development programme for them in partnership with the National Police Service.

Thanks to effective investment in their domestic information position and the resulting operational analyses in 2013, the AIVD and the "Article 60" teams now have an even better insight into developments in the field of national security, some of them unprecedented. As a result of improved management and increased capacity, they are also able to switch the focus of their investigations more quickly than ever before. A substantial proportion of regional capacity in the past year has been devoted to Dutch jihadists travelling to and returning from Syria.

#### **4.1.4** Ministries of General Affairs, Foreign Affairs and Defence

AIVD information about developments abroad helps the Dutch ministries to formulate and implement the nation's foreign policy, both bilaterally and in international forums like the UN, the EU and NATO. The principal users of this material are the ministries of General Affairs (the Prime Minister's department) and Foreign Affairs; the AIVD provides them with intelligence reports and briefings on specific developments. The service also works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on such matters as travel advice and support for Dutch export control policy.

#### **4.2** International co-operation

#### **4.2.1** Foreign intelligence, security and sigint services

For the AIVD to function effectively, international co-operation is a must. The transnational nature of many threats and interests makes it impossible for an intelligence service to identify, investigate and elucidate all risks to national security by itself. International partnerships help to substantially improve the AIVD's information and intelligence position. For this reason, an extensive and thorough network of relationships with foreign services is hugely important.

In 2013 the AIVD worked closely with a large number of intelligence, security and sigint services in other countries. To further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of these relationships, liaison officers are stationed at a number of strategic locations abroad.

The scope and intensity of these international partnerships vary. Determining factors include the extent of a common interest and how well the foreign service complements the AIVD. The constitutional framework in which it operates and its general democratic credentials are also crucial, as are the AIVD's past experiences with it. All such partnerships are assessed and evaluated on a constant basis.

Foreign services only benefit from sharing knowledge and resources with the AIVD if it is prepared to do the same, on a "quid pro quo" basis. Were it unable or unwilling to do so, its international network would evaporate as a source of information. In the past year the service has invested heavily in the quality, strengthening and development of its

international partnerships at the operational and strategic levels.

This network is also involved in security screenings for positions involving confidentiality (see section 3.5). Without its help, it would be impossible to screen Dutch citizens who have lived or worked abroad in recent years, which would exclude them by default from such positions.

#### **4.3** Organisational developments

A new information and documentation system entered into service with the AIVD in 2013. This has considerably improved the service's internal information management at a time when the amount of data to be processed is constantly increasing.

In the so-called "autumn accord" of 2013, the planned reduction in the AIVD's budget was halved to €34 million a year on a structural basis, to be achieved in 2018. Preparations to make the necessary savings have now begun, with decisions already taken on how they will be effected. Measures include efficiency improvements and a far-reaching austerity programme. The number of administrative and support functions is to be substantially reduced, with the service's total workforce contracting by about 200.

To coincide with this exercise, a reorganisation was initiated. As a result of that, the AIVD can save €23 million with the minimum possible impact upon its operations. In making the remainder of the necessary economies, some €11 million, the service's operational capacity will be spared as much as

possible. One measure under consideration is a reduction in the relatively high cost of its premises.



## **KEY FIGURES**

**Table 2** Requests for information

Subject of information requested	Submitted	Dealt with	Granted
Applicant	199	86	30
Deceased relative	23	21	9
Third party	5	4	-
Administrative matters	106	92	38
Total	333	203	77

Table 3

Objections and appeals against rejected requests for information

	Submitted	Dealt with	Dismissed	Upheld	Inadmissible	Withdrawn
Objections	47	35	27	6	-	2
Appeals	10	5	5	-	-	-
Second appeals	4	1	1	-	-	-

**Table 4**Results of security screenings, including delegated procedures

	Positive (clearance issued, "Art. 13 notification")	Negative (clearance refused or withdrawn)	Total
Level A, by AIVD	1326	7	1333
Level B, by AIVD	3507	31	3538
Level B, by AIVD through KMar/ police/DKDB	1242	673	1915
Level B, by KMar/ police/DKDB	26409	-	26409
Level C, by AIVD	721	5	726
Total	33205	716	33921

**Table 5**Results of objections and appeals against security clearance denials

	Dismissed	Upheld	Inadmissible	Withdrawn	Denied	Accepted	Total
Objections	32	15	8	3	-	-	58
Appeals	9	1			3	-	13
Second appeals	-	1	2	-	-	-	3
Preliminary injunctions	-	-	-	-	3	-	3
Total	41	17	10	3	6	-	77

**Table 6**Income and expenditure 2012-2013
(in EUR x million)

	2012		2013	
	Estimates	Realization	Estimates	Realization
Expenditure	202,5	198,9	195	195,1
General expenditure	191,8	188,3	185,6	185,8
Confidential expenditure	10,8	10,6	9,4	9,4
Income	1,7	3,2	8,2	7,4

**Table 7** Complaints dealt with

Submitted to the minister of the Interior and Kingdom relations					
Total submitted 2013	26				
(Apparently) declared unfounded	11				
(Partly) declared valid	5				
Informally dealt with to satisfaction of complainant	3				
Not taken into consideration	5				
Dropped	1				
Still under consideration on 31 December 2013	4				

Submitted to the National ombudsman				
Total submitted in 2013	4			
Declared unfounded	2			
Not taken into consideration	1			
Sent to minister for consideration	1			

#### Table 8

Number of reports of notification sent out

**2013** 19

#### Activism

The general name for the phenomenon where people or groups, outside the parliamentary system but within the limits of the law, strive to improve the rights and living conditions of individuals, groups and also animals.

**GLOSSARY** 

#### Al-Qaeda

In current usage, this refers collectively to both the core Al-Qaeda and to networks associated with core Al-Qaeda. These parties are allied with one another ideologically: the leaders of local jihadist groups adopt the ideology of the international jihad held by core Al-Qaeda and swear their allegiance to the core Al-Qaeda leader. They subsequently use the name Al-Qaeda, followed by the name of the area where they are active. Examples are Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) and Al-Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP). These groups may support the international jihad, but they also clearly have their own individual agendas. There is not necessarily any co-operation or control taking place

between core Al-Qaeda and the allied organisations. Because the term Al-Qaeda can refer to different organisations, the practical use of the term presents difficulties. Common practice is to use the specific name of the organisation.

#### Anarchist extremism

This refers to various overlapping forms of action, with general mutual support for each other's protests. These (often radical) protests are based on an anarchist ideology and take extremist form, including large-scale vandalism and arson in some cases. These protests may also involve personal intimidation.

#### Countries of concern

Countries suspected of developing weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and which pursue objectives that may pose a threat to the international legal order and to the security and interests of the Netherlands and its allies.

#### Counterterrorism Alert System (ATb)

An alert system for government and trade and industry that warns operational services and private-sector companies of increased threats, enabling both to take quick action, which could diminish the risk of an attack or could contain the results of one.

#### **CBRNe** weapons

The term for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons and home-made explosives.

#### **Delivery systems**

The means of delivery necessary for the effective use of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) weapons, such as ballistic missiles, cruise missiles and unmanned aircraft.

#### **Dual-use goods**

Goods or materials that can be used for either civilian or military purposes. This term is used in the fight against the further proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

#### Extreme

Individuals, groups or organisations are defined as extreme when their actions extend to but do not exceed the boundaries of what is acceptable within a democratic legal framework.

#### Extremism, extremist

The phenomenon whereby people and groups, when striving to improve the rights and living conditions of individuals, groups or animals, deliberately commit illegal and sometimes violent acts.

#### Humint

Abbreviation for *Human intelligence*: information that is gathered by using human sources, for the AIVD these are informants or agents.

#### Jihadism

An extremist ideology based upon the glorification of violent iihad.

#### Jihadist network

A fluid, dynamic and vaguely delineated structure consisting of a number of radical Muslims with some form of mutual association, both individually and at collective level in the form of cells or groups. At least temporarily, they are linked by a common purpose: the pursuit of a jihadist aim. For the AIVD, a person involved in a jihadist network is classified as a member if they play an active part in it and consciously contribute towards achieving the jihadist goal.

#### National security domain

People, premises, services and events for which the central government bears a responsibility because of their importance to the Dutch state and Dutch society.

#### Official report

A notification – in writing – to a person or institution revealing personal details known to the AIVD that could be of interest to the recipient in discharging their responsibilities and taking measures.

#### Osint

Abbreviation for *Open source intelligence*: gathering information from open sources.

#### Position involving confidentiality

A job or other appointment in which abuse of office could seriously compromise national security or other important interests of the state. This is the case when there is access to state secrets, when a lapse of integrity could endanger national security, and with respect to certain specific positions in vital sectors.

#### **Proliferation**

The (further) spread of weapons of mass destruction (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons) and of their delivery systems.

#### Radicalisation

A growing willingness to pursue and/or support fundamental changes in society that would endanger the democratic order, possibly by undemocratic means which are in conflict with or could pose a threat to that order.

#### Radicalism

The pursuit and/or support of fundamental changes in society that would endanger the democratic legal order, possibly by undemocratic means which are themselves in conflict with that order.

#### Safety and Security System

A cooperative arrangement led by the Safety and Security Unit of the National Coordinator for Counter-Terrorism (NCTV), on behalf of the central government. This cooperative system bears responsibility for the security of people, property and services within the so-called national security domain in the Netherlands. The AIVD provides threat information concerning these subjects within the Safety and Security System framework.

#### Salafism

A broad ideological movement which seeks a literal return to the 'pure' Islam of the faith's early period.

#### Security screening

An investigation of a person in search of facts and circumstances which on grounds of national security may be relevant to their holding a specific position involving confidentiality.

#### Separatism

Attempts by a particular section of a population to shake off existing national ties and establish a state of its own.

#### Sigint

Abbreviation of Signals intelligence: the interception and localisation of electronic signals transmitted on radio frequencies.

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#### Special intelligence resources

Technical and other instruments which are deployed in the exercise of a special power under the Wiv 2002 and which are usually secret in nature.

#### Techint

Abbreviation of Technological intelligence: information that is gathered by technical means, for example a telephone tap. Sigint is a specific form of Techint

#### Tempest

Unwanted emission of electromagnetic signals by electrical equipment and systems.

#### Terrorism

Ideologically motivated actual or threatened violence against persons, property or the fabric of society, with the aim of bringing about social change, creating fear amongst the population, or influencing the political decision-making process.

#### Travint

Abbreviation of *Travel intelligence*: the acquisition and analysis of travel information.

#### Violent jihad

The armed struggle against supposed enemies of Islam, legitimised by the invocation of Islamic legal doctrine.

#### Vital sectors

Sectors and sections of the national infrastructure which are so crucial that their failure or serious disruption could cause major damage to Dutch society.



