

ISLAMOPHOBIA AND THE COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGIES

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INTRODUCTION

Islamophobia - a term widely used both in the media and political and academic circles - has become a current issue in world public opinion. The word "Islamophobia" is formed from the word "Islam" and the Greek word "phobos". Islamophobia, as a term, can be described as prejudice and hatred towards Islam, and racism against a Muslim minority.¹ The term combines all sorts of different discussions, discourse and actions emerging from the ideological core bred by an irrational fear of Islam.²

The concept does not hold a legal description, because studies in this field are yet to produce a binding international legal document. Also, there are those who are against such a conceptualization. However, the fact that the term has found its place in the areas of interest and activity of certain main international organizations such as the United Nations (UN), the Council of Europe (CE), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has led to a general acceptance of the term.

Islamophobia is accompanied by hostility, hatred and othering originating from an irrational, groundless fear of Islam and Muslims, discriminatory actions and the legitimization of violence. Islam's role in the past as a source of fear constructing Western Christian identity causes the West to approach Islam and Muslims with prejudices arising from their collective subconscious. Such prejudices prevent the scientific, objective and holistic consideration of the faith, civilization and culture of Islam. Moreover, Islam and Muslims - sometimes deliberately and especially for political motives - are depicted side by side with violence and terrorism. Western researchers, with a few exceptions, are unable to maintain the scientific perspective they use in other areas when it comes to Islam and Muslims. In this context, Rumi, a universal philosopher whose ideas have come to inspire humanity since the 13th century, said: "Prejudice buries knowledge. While the unprejudiced approach turns the illiterate into a scholar, the prejudiced perspective ruins and falsifies the knowledge."³

According to some, following the 9/11 terrorist attacks the world has entered a new political era characterized as the "age of terrorism". All the measures of this new era could not

¹ Necmi KARSLI, İslamofobi'nin Psikolojik Olarak İncelenmesi, Dinbilimleri Akademik Araştırma Dergisi, Volume 13, Issue 1, 2013, p.80

² Jocelyne CESARI, Batıda İslamofobi: Avrupa ve Amerika Birleşik Devletleri Arasında Bir Mukayase, in John L. ESPOSITO, İbrahim KALIN, İslamofobi, 21. Yüzyılda Çoğulculuk Sorunu, İnsan Yayınları, İstanbul, 2015, p.64

³Eva De Vitray-MEYEROVITCH/Djamchid MORTAZAVI, Mathnawi, *La quête de l'absolu*, édition du Rocher, Paris 2004, p. 460

prevent the bloody terrorist attacks in Madrid 2004, London 2005 and the attacks in France at the beginning of 2015 called the "September 11 of France." ⁴

The perpetrators of these attacks were presented as Islamist terrorists, radical Islamists, fundamentalist Muslims, Muslim terrorists and jihadists in Western media and in the discourse of certain politicians and intellectuals which led to a similar public opinion. This discourse has also shaped the national counter-terrorism activities. This concept put Muslim society located anywhere in the World under suspicion. The conceptualizations labelling a number of barbaric, inhuman acts and their perpetrators as Islam and Muslims wound the vast majority of Muslims particularly those living in the West, and make them feel accused, offended and excluded. On the other hand, it triggers the discourse of prejudice, spite and hatred, and acts of violence characterized as Islamophobic in minds of the Westerners unfamiliar with Islam and Muslims.

Due to globalization, the Islamophobic repercussions of such a conceptualization – has not been contained in the West but extended to South East Asia and Africa, –giving rise to radicalization of members of various faiths against Muslims. Moreover governments introduce obstacles to the implementation of the basic human rights of Muslim minorities under the pretext of the fight against terrorism.

1. ISLAMOPHOBIA: CONCEPT AND PHENOMENON

1.1 Term and Concept

The term is formed of two concepts - Islam and -phobie. Therefore, the term Islamophobia means "the fear of Islam."

The term Islamophobia is believed to be first used in 1910 by a group of French orientalist specialists in West Africa Islam studies.⁵ For example, in his thesis in law on "Muslim Policy in the French Western Africa" of 1910 Alain Quellien defined Islamophobia as the "prejudice against Islam." According to the author, there was and is again a prejudice against Islam in Western and Christian civilizations. For them, Muslims are the natural and irreconcilable enemies of Christians and Europeans. Islam is the negation of the civilization, and is an equivalent of barbarism and ill-will and violence are all expected from Muslims.⁶

According to the second view, the term was used by the painter Alphonso Etienne Dinet and Algerian intellectual Sliman ben Ibrahim in their 1918 biography of Islam's prophet Muhammed.⁷ However, the term did not become a part of everyday use until 1990s.⁸

Towards the end of 1980s and at the beginning of 1990s, the term came to be used, in Anglo-Saxon countries, particularly in the United Kingdom, to refer to Muslims living in the

⁴ Kutlay TELLİ, Uluslararası Terörizm ile Mücadelede Fransa'nın Ocak 2015 Paradoksu, TBB Dergisi 2015, p. 117

⁵ Abdellali HAJJAT, Maewan MOHAMMED, Islamophobie, Comment les élites françaises fabriquent le problème musulman, La découverte, Paris 2013, p.18

⁶ Mohammed MOUSSAOUI, Islamophobie ou racisme antimusulman ? http://www.atlasinfo.fr/Islamophobie-ou-racisme-antimusulman_a53527.html access: 21.04.2015

⁷ Issa DIAB, Religiophobia, Fear of Religion, Fear of the Religious, in. Islamophia, Islamophobia and Violation of Human Rights, ODVV, Tahrán 2013, p.62.

⁸ CESARI, *ibid*, p.63.

West who are victims of rejection and discrimination.⁹ The Oxford English Dictionary - adopting a similar view - states that the term was first used in 1991.¹⁰

Though the sources argue that the term was first used in a report dated 1997 by an English Think Tank named Runnymede Trust, the aforementioned English and French sources verify that the term had been used before 1997. However, this report is significant for it is the first publication in which Islamophobia was used as a term in a technical context.¹¹

The Runnymede report played an important role in spreading the term Islamophobia. The report on religious prejudices and the problems of Muslims had significant repercussions in international arena and academic circles. It reveals that an anti-Islam prejudice dominates the studies on Muslims and the problems Muslims face. The report mentions that this prejudice incites discrimination and hatred towards Muslims in work-life and education, and mischaracterizes them in media and daily life.¹²

On the other hand, following the 9/11 attacks the term has come to be widely used to express the actual and intellectual attacks on Muslims.¹³

As per the definitions of the term in international documents, 1991 Runnymede Trust Report defines Islamophobia as "unfounded hostility towards Muslims, and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims" while the 1997 Runnymede Report defines it as "fear and hatred of Islam and Muslims exacerbated by certain views attributing negative and derogatory stereotyped judgements."¹⁴

An article published in the *Journal of Sociology* in 2007 defines Islamophobia as the continuation of anti-Muslim racism, anti-Asia and anti-Arab racism.¹⁵ The 1st edition of the 2006 Robert Dictionary defines Islamophobia as "a particular form of racism aimed at Islam and Muslims manifesting in France as malicious acts and an ethnic discrimination against the Maghreb immigrants." The definition in the 2014 edition: "Hostility towards Islam and Muslims." 2014 edition of the Grand Larousse uses a similar definition: "Hostility towards Islam and Muslims."¹⁶ According to the EU Agency of Fundamental Rights, Islamophobia is the general term for the discriminatory treatment to which the individuals of the Islamic world are subject.¹⁷

⁹ Mohammed MOUSSAOUI, Islamofobie ou racisme antimusulman ?, http://www.atlasinfo.fr/Islamofobie-ou-racisme-antimusulman_a53527.html access: 21.04.2015

¹⁰ ALLEN, ibid, p. 5

¹¹ Hilal BARIN, Runnymede Trust Raporları Bağlamında İslamofobi, <http://setav.org/tr/runnymede-trust-raporlari-baglaminda-islamofobi/yorum/17488>, access: 16.04. 2015

¹² Murat AKTAŞ, Avrupa'da Yükselen İslamofobi ve Medeniyetler Çatışması Tezi, Ankara Avrupa Çalışmaları Dergisi Volume:13, No:1 (Year: 2014), p.38

¹³ Tuba ER, Kemal ATAMAN, İslamofobi ve Avrupa'da Birlikte Yaşama Tecrübesi Üzerine Uludağ Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi, Volume: 17, No: 2, 2008, p.755

¹⁴İslamofobi: Hepimiz İçin Bir Meydan Okuma (İslamophobia: A challenge for Us All) . ESPOSITO, KALIN, ibid, p. 19

¹⁵ Reuven FIRESTONE, İslamofobi& Antisemitizm: Tarihi Seyir ve İmkanlar, http://www.academia.edu/8745622/%C4%B0islamofobi_and_Antisemitizm_Tarihi_Seyir_Ve_%C4%B0mkanlar, access: 4.5.2015

¹⁶ MOUSSAOUI , http://www.atlasinfo.fr/Islamofobie-ou-racisme-antimusulman_a53527.html

¹⁷ EUMC, *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia*, http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/156-Manifestations_EN.pdf, access:27.09.2012.

Today "Islamophobia" is used as an umbrella term for various types of religious discrimination against Muslims. The term is gradually gaining scientific acceptance as a separate term from stereotype, racism and xenophobia towards Muslims.¹⁸

1.2. Phenomenon

Although the conceptualization dates back to the beginning of the 20th century, the roots of Islamophobia goes back to the Islamic dominance over the Christian world in the Middle East, Anatolia and Andalusia.

The Christian reaction to the unexpected progress of Islam manifested itself as a deep fear and anger in their perception of Muslims as the "others". Though the term Islamophobia had not been invented yet, that was exactly what is today defined as Islamophobia. Theological thesis and researches show that Islamophobia pervades the nature of the Christian culture similar to anti-Semitism in Christianity.¹⁹

An anecdote in his work *Fihî-Mafih – Discourses-* of Rumi (1207-1273) who lived in a time shortly after the 1st Crusades (1096-1097) provoked by the Byzantium due to the Anatolian Seljuk's advancing to Europe and making Nicea the capital should be mentioned in this context. This document is the reflection of the 13th century Byzantium Christian perception of the fear of Islam in today's Western Islamophobia. They said to Rumi: "The people of Rum have urged me to give my daughter in marriage to the Tartars, so that our religion may become one and this new religion of Islam can disappear."²⁰

British historian Norman Daniel confirms this thesis in his book "Islam and the West". To him, the initial reactions of Christians to Muslims share some common threads with today's new reactions. The tradition has never disappeared and is still valid. Naturally, some variations also appear. The Western Europe has a unique view of Islam that originates around 1100 and 1300 and -that has only slightly changed since then.²¹

Xenophobia, discrimination and racism - Europe's ancient and deep-rooted problems - have gained a new dimension with religion axis and Islamophobia after the 9/11 attacks. Today, discourse and actions in this direction are raising in European countries. Europe takes a common stance on Islamophobia and racism against Muslim immigrants and their kind. Such attitudes have increased significantly after 9/11 and governments' reactions to terrorism. Muslims came under attack in many countries and mosques were destroyed or burnt.²²

Western public opinion was formed based on the Iranian Revolution and the aggressive policies of Saddam Hussein for the rapidly rising Islamophobia before the 9/11 attacks. Thus, French journalists Rachel and Jean-Pierre Cartier describe the climate during the 1991 Gulf

¹⁸ Hilal h, Runnymede Trust Raporları Bağlamında İslamofobi, <http://setav.org/tr/runnymede-trust-raporlari-baglaminda-islamofobi/yorum/17488>, access: 16.04. 2015

¹⁹ Reuven FIRESTONE, İslamofobi& Antisemitizm: Tarihi Seyir Ve İmkanlar, http://www.academia.edu/8745622/%C4%B0islamofobi_and_Antisemitizm_Tarihi_Seyir_Ve_%C4%B0mkanlar, access: 4.5.2015

²⁰ Rumi's answer is: When was it that the religion was one? It was always two, three. And there had always been fights and wars among them. How is it possible to make the religions as one? Religion can only be one when the world is ended. However, it is impossible to achieve that here, in this world. Because everybody has a different motive, a different wish; and it hinders unity. But they will be one there. They will turn to the same direction. They will have the same language and ears. Abdülbâki GÖLPINARLI (translation.), *Fihî Mâ-Fih*, İnkılap, İstanbul 2009, p.23; Eva De Vitray-MEYEROVITCH, *Le livre du dedans*, Babel, Paris 2010, p.53.

²¹ Vincent GEISSIER, *L'islamophobie en France au regard du débat européen* În Rémiy LEVEAU, Khadija Mohsen-FINAN, *Musulmans de France et d'Europe, L'islamophobie en France au regard du débat européen*, CNRS Editions,, p.59.

²² Thomas HAMMARBERG (translation. Aysen Ekmakçi), *Avrupa'da İnsan Hakları, İletişim Yayınları*, Ankara 2011, p.49

War as follows: "The Gulf War was about to reach the military phase. The air was filled with fear and anxiety and moreover some were enjoying a weird enthusiasm for war. Rachel and I were at a loss as we sensed the rise of distrust and grudge against Islam. Such times of tension are ripe for rough simplifications and questionable confusions. Moreover, we heard some reasoning at the homes of some of our friends that made our blood run cold: Actually, you two are naive. In your last two books you included two people that presented Islam as a tolerant and pure Sufi religion. Open your eyes! The real Islam, the one you are avoiding, is the Islam of Ayatollah and Saddam Hussain. It is a religion of grudge. That is the religion of the holy war. It is a threat with which we constantly have to fight to avoid total destruction."²³

It is true that associating Islam with bad and incorrect actions and implementations of Muslims, organizations or countries - whether they claim to take Islam as reference or not- or the violence in the Muslim world feed the prejudice, fear and anxiety against the Muslim foreigners living in the European countries. Moreover, puts a negative influence on the Europeans that treat Muslims objectively.

On the other hand, predictions of some of the research agencies in favor of Muslims have broad repercussion in the Western press and flame the public fear of Islam and Muslims. For example the April 2015 report of the Pew Research Center²⁴ has the following evaluation: "If current demographic trends continue, however, Islam will nearly catch up by the middle of the 21st century. Between 2010 and 2050, the world's total population is expected to rise to 9.3 billion, a 35% increase. Over that same period, Muslims – a comparatively youthful population with high fertility rates – are projected to increase by 73%. The number of Christians also is projected to rise, but more slowly, at about the same rate (35%) as the global population overall. In conclusion according to the Pew research projections in 2050 the Muslim population (2.8 billion, 30%) and the Christian population (2.9 billion, 31%) will be almost equal."²⁵

Islamophobic actions manifest in various ways. Some are explicit and clear, some are implicit and obscure. They take various shapes and have different degrees of aggression. It may be a verbal or physical attack. In some cases the targets were the mosques, Islamic centers and the properties of Muslim population. Islamophobia manifests itself in the form of suspicion, harassment, ridicule, rejection and open discrimination in workplaces, health institutions, schools and residences, and indirect discrimination, hatred or denial of access to goods and services in other public spaces.²⁶

The chapter the "Nature of Islamophobia of the Runnymede Report" explains the basic perspectives of the Islamophobic discourse escalated following the 9/11 attacks and apparent in the views of the so called "experts". According to them;

1. Islam is seen as a monolithic bloc, static and unresponsive to new realities
2. Islam is seen as separate and other - (a) not having any aims or values in common with other cultures (b) not affected by them (c) not influencing them
3. Islam is seen as inferior to the West - barbaric, irrational, primitive, sexist
4. Islam is seen as violent, aggressive, threatening, supportive of terrorism, engaged in a 'clash of civilisations'
5. Islam is seen as a political ideology, used for political or military advantage

²³ Eva de Vitray- MEYEROVI TCH, *Islam, l'autre visage* Albin Michel, Paris 1995, p.8

²⁴ The original name of the non-governmental organization founded in 2001 is Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life

²⁵ Pew Research Center, April 2, 2015, "The Future of World Religions: Population Growth Projections, 2010-2050, p.7

²⁶ ESPOSITO/KALIN, *ibid*, p.49

6. Criticisms made by Islam of the 'West' are rejected out of hand without consideration
7. Hostility towards Islam is used to justify discriminatory practices towards Muslims and their subsequent exclusion from mainstream society
8. Anti-Muslim hostility accepted as natural and 'normal'²⁷

Though extending back a long time, Islamophobia has recently become an important political instrument and discourse. Islamophobia appears particularly in the media and turns into a legal matter in the context of human rights. Islamophobia is considered as a matter of human rights since it also involves intolerance, exclusion and discrimination against Muslims which lead to hate speech and hate crimes.²⁸

Today, it seems that the longstanding prejudices and discrimination against Muslims have reached to a level which could become a source of hate crimes. Also, hate speech triggered by Islamophobic behaviors and attitudes causes feelings of labelling and exclusion, especially towards Muslims and constitutes an attack on people's identity, their individual values and prestige.²⁹

Islamophobia threatens social unity in the countries where Muslims live as immigrants and it also causes violations of human rights, occasionally resulting in homicide.³⁰

To put it simply, Islamophobia is a hate speech and any hate speech is incorrect. Also, it is a matter of human rights and it should be discussed as hate speech and it should matter so as the treatment that the anti-Semitism is subject to. Concerning 1.6 billion Muslims, Islamophobia is not just a problem of people who live in the West or in the United States as it is a phenomenon created via Islam with results affecting Muslims everywhere.³¹

Nowadays, as Nathan Lean suggests, there is an "Islamophobia Industry" which is gradually getting stronger in the world by using all forms of media and any opportunities to generate fear and concern through Islam and Muslims.³² While this Industry is lining some people's pockets or returning as votes in favor of certain political parties, it disrupts the peace of societies and humanity.

Today, it seems that Islamophobia has become a chronic disease that is fostered by mass media, religious groups and other interest groups which directly or indirectly exploit the fear propaganda.³³ According to Buehler: "Islamophobia is a disease which denies one fifth of the world population. This disease refers to a phobia which is defined as the irrational fear of an unreal thing or person."³⁴

²⁷ Chris ALLEN, The 'first' decade of Islamophobia: 10 years of the Runnymede Trust report "Islamophobia: a challenge for us all" http://www.islamiccouncilwa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Decade_of_Islamophobia.pdf, access : 21.05.2015

²⁸ <http://islamophobia.info/files/downloads/konferans-el-kitabi.pdf>, access: 28.4.2015

²⁹ Mehmet YÜKSEL, İslamofobinin Tarihsel Temellerine Bir Bakış: Oryantalizm ya da Batı ve Öteki, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri, Ankara 2012 , p.229

³⁰ Hüseyin YILMAZ, İslam Karşıtlığında (İslamofobi) cihad Algısının Rolü, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri, Ankara 2012 p.237, (217-231)

³¹ BARIN, ibid, <http://setav.org/tr/runnymede-trust-raporlari-baglaminda-islamofobi/yorum/17488>, access: 16.04. 2015

³² Nathan LEAN (Translated by: İbrahim YILMAZ), İslamofobi Endüstrisi, DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2015

³³ Arthur F. BUEHLER (Translated by: Mehmet ATALAY), İslamofobi: Batı'nın "Karanlık Tarafı"nın Bir Yansıması, *Ankara Üniversitesi İlahiyat Fakültesi Dergisi* 55:1 (2014), p.123.

³⁴ BUEHLER, ibid, p.132

2. RELIGIONS, ISLAM AND TERRORISM

In reality religions offer peace, justice, brotherhood, love and mutual help; but in the past and nowadays it is a fact that certain people arise among almost all religions who resort to unjustified violence by exploiting religion. Today, acts of violence and attacks by Israel against Palestinian people occur in front of international communities as –living proof of state terrorism. Reports of international organizations for human rights indicate that Buddhist communities in Burma perpetrate acts of violence against Muslims in Arakan and the Christian Anti-Balaka organization in the Central African Republic carries out acts of violence against Muslims, which may even be considered as genocide extending beyond terrorism.

And yet, it seems that especially in the Western media, the only religion associated with violence and terrorism is Islam. The politically-driven acts of violence perpetrated by a Muslim individual or groups are ruled out or deliberately being concealed.³⁵

The way that media associates Islam with images and clichés, stereotype concepts which result in connotations of terrorism, violence, and brutality paves the way for the danger of Islam turning into an exaggerated fear in the eyes of average citizens who don't know much about Islam, and even about their own social issues.³⁶

Not only the media but also many institutions and actors, particularly the political actors, play a role in the creation of such incorrect perceptions. Especially certain political actors make references to and emphasize radical Islam and Islamic terror through an approach that fosters the negative perception of Islam to legitimize their policies, strategies and actions in the Middle East. As media and politics are correlated, one always feeds and supports the other. Therefore, an anti-Islam spiral develops and this spiral also negatively affects other institutions.³⁷

Obviously, in the terrorist activities between Ireland and England – a venue for Catholic and Protestant conflicts - a religious characterization has never been made despite violence stemming from the religious beliefs of the militants and there has never been a characterization as Christian, Catholic or Protestant terrorists. Thus, just as we do not characterize people with their religious beliefs when we are talking about terrorists who are Christian and Jewish or those of other religions, the same respect and consistency should be shown for Islam, too.³⁸

The famous boxer Muhammed Ali visited the ruins of the World Trade Center on 11 September 11, 2001 and when reporters asked him how he felt about the suspects sharing his Islamic faith, Ali responded “How do you feel about Hitler sharing yours?”³⁹

Also, the statistics regarding the roles of those with Muslim origins in the US and European countries in events characterized as terrorism reveal that such characterizations are totally wrong. Only 6% of terrorist attacks committed from 1980 to 2005 in the US are linked to

³⁵ YILMAZ, *ibid*, p.247

³⁶ Orhan GÖKÇE, *Avrupa Medyasının ve Kamuoyunun İslam Algısı, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri, Ankara 2012*, p.102

³⁷ Vahap GÖKSU, Rukiye SAYGILI, *Amerikan Medyasının İslam Algısı, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri, Ankara 2012*, p.277

³⁸ Zakir AVŞAR, *İslami Terörizm Nitelemesine İtiraz, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri, Ankara 2012*, p.158

³⁹ Nevzat TARHAN, *Şiddetin Psikososyopolitik Boyutu, Şiddet Karşısında İslam, DİB Yayınları, Ankara 2014*, p.109

Muslims (and the percentage of Muslims in the US population is 6%). And only 4% of current EUROPOL-based terrorist reports (2006-2008) are linked to Muslims.⁴⁰

There are no references that Islam, which means “peace”, would legitimize actions that are characterized as terrorism in terms of principles and values. Moreover, much more severe punishments are set forth against those actions in Islamic resources and past practices

When the principles and rules of Islam regarding international relations, war and peace, living together with people of different religions, methods of informing and calling to Islam, extremism and violence are examined, it is clearly understood that any attacks by any individuals, organizations and states on civilians, and any actions that would jeopardize the security of life and property of innocent people and cause them to feel fear and terror either during war or at others times can be legitimized under no circumstance.⁴¹

Taking into account the principles of Islam, it is crystal clear that terrorism, violence, depression and anarchy, regardless of what it is called, have nothing to do with Islam. Apart from the fact that Islam has nothing to do with such destructive actions, it also excluded any sorts of anarchy, unrest, plot, defeatism, oppression, torture and maltreatment, in brief terrorism, from the agenda of Muslims. The purpose of religion is not to distort and degenerate the society, but to the contrary, it is to glorify and promote individuals and society in line with their disposition materially and morally.⁴²

3. AN OUTLOOK ON RELIGION AND TERRORISM IN INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL COUNTER-TERRORISM STRATEGIES

3.1. In general terms

International organizations have prepared counter-terrorism strategies taking into account human rights at universal, regional and supra-national levels. Among those strategies, the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, Guidelines on Human Rights and the Fight against Terrorism adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy are the most prominent ones. Also, many countries have published their own national counter-terrorism strategies based on their threat assessments and shared them with public. The threats of organizations such as Al Qaeda played a key role in those strategies prepared after 9/11 and examining how discussions on Islam-terrorism relationship in Western public opinion reflected in those strategies becomes useful in the context of Islamophobia.

In this regard, it would be explanatory in the context of Islamophobia-terrorism relationship if the type of threat addressed in the key international and national strategies and the expressions and contexts about religion or Islam are analyzed.

3.2. United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy was adopted by the General Assembly on 8 September 2006, with the decision No. 60/288.⁴³ The United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism

⁴⁰ BUEHLER, *ibid*, p. 133, footnote, 24

⁴¹ Ahmet ÖZEL, *İslam ve Terör, Fıkhî bir yaklaşım*, Küre yayınları, İstanbul 2007, p. 111.

⁴² AVŞAR,a.g.m, p. 155

⁴³ For the original version of the full text of UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, see:<http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/strategy-counter-terrorism.shtml>

Strategy was adopted by Member States on 8 September 2006. The strategy, in the form of a resolution and an annexed Plan of Action (A/RES/60/288), is a unique global instrument that will enhance national, regional and international efforts to counter terrorism.

In the decision of the General Assembly, terrorism is described as one of the most serious threats to international peace and security: Reaffirming that acts, methods and practices of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations are activities aiming the destruction of human rights, fundamental freedoms and democracy, threatening territorial integrity, security of States and destabilizing legitimately constituted Governments, and that the international community should take the necessary steps to enhance cooperation to prevent and combat terrorism.

It is clearly stressed in the Strategy that: “Reaffirming also that terrorism cannot and should not be associated with any religion, nationality, civilization or ethnic group. It is also striking that to prevent the spread of terrorism - among others - respect for all religious values, beliefs and cultures is ensured:

Bearing in mind the need to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. Affirming Member States' determination to continue to do all they can to resolve conflict, end foreign occupation, confront oppression, eradicate poverty, promote sustained economic growth, sustainable development, global prosperity, good governance, human rights for all and rule of law, improve intercultural understanding and ensure respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs or cultures.

In the first paragraph of the Part I titled “Measures to address the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism” of the Action Plan annexed to the Strategy; it is emphasized that “*none of these conditions can excuse or justify acts of terrorism*” and “*the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism are specified as lack of rule of law and violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion*” (paragraphe.1). With these expressions, it is argued that Islamophobic approach and practices will contribute to the spread of terrorism.

We resolve to undertake the following measures aimed at addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism, including but not limited to prolonged unresolved conflicts, dehumanization of victims of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, lack of rule of law and violations of human rights, ethnic, national and religious discrimination, political exclusion, socio-economic marginalization, and lack of good governance, while recognizing that none of these conditions can excuse or justify acts of terrorism.

At the end of the first paragraph, determination is emphasized to undertake a number of measures aimed at addressing the conditions conducive to the spread of terrorism. The first two of these seven measures include issues which also matter in fight against Islamophobia:

“To continue to arrange under the auspices of the United Nations initiatives and programs to promote dialogue, tolerance and understanding among civilizations, cultures, peoples and religions, and to promote mutual respect for and prevent the defamation of religions, religious values, beliefs and cultures. In this regard, we welcome the launching by the Secretary-General of the initiative on the Alliance of Civilizations. We also welcome similar initiatives that have been taken in other parts of the world. (paragraphe. 2).”

To promote a culture of peace, justice and human development, ethnic, national and religious tolerance, and respect for all religions, religious values, beliefs or cultures by establishing and encouraging, as appropriate, education and public awareness programs involving all sectors of society. In this regard, we encourage the United Nations Educational,

Scientific and Cultural Organization to play a key role, including through inter-faith and intra-faith dialogue and dialogue among civilizations. (paragraphe.3)

To implement the Strategy, certain working groups were established under the “Counter-Terrorism Task Force and one of them is the Working Group on Radicalization and Extremism.”⁴⁴ It is a positive approach to use neutral concepts such as “radicalization and extremism that lead to terrorism”, “extremism that leads to violence” that are not associated with any religion and belief in the UN activities and documents and this approach should be followed by national strategies.

3.3. Guidelines on the Fight against Terrorism adopted by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe

“Guidelines on human rights and the fight against terrorism” adopted by the Committee of Ministers on July 11, 2002 at the 804th meeting is an important international document as it brings a different approach to fight against terrorism and addresses this fight in line with absolute respect for human rights.

In the aforementioned document, seventeen guidelines have been adopted considering the UN conventions on human rights, particularly the European Convention on Human Rights and the case-law of European Court of Human Rights and the Member States are invited to ensure that they are widely disseminated among all authorities responsible for the fight against terrorism.

In the Preamble of the Guidelines, an approach which is not associating terrorism with any religion or belief is adopted; unequivocally condemning all acts, methods and practices of terrorism as criminal and unjustifiable, wherever and by whomever committed.

In the subparagraph h) of the Preamble, the necessity to promote a multicultural and inter-religious dialogue in fight against terrorism is emphasized: *Keeping in mind that the fight against terrorism implies long-term measures with a view to preventing the causes of terrorism, by promoting, in particular, cohesion in our societies and a multicultural and inter-religious dialogue.*

As expressed in the Guidelines, “In order to fight against the causes of terrorism, it is also essential to promote multicultural and inter-religious dialogue. The Parliamentary Assembly has devoted a number of important documents to this issue, among which its Recommendations 1162 (1991) Contribution of the Islamic civilization to European culture, 1202 (1993) Religious tolerance in a democratic society, 1396 (1999) Religion and democracy, 11 1426 (1999) European democracies facing terrorism, as well as its Resolution 1258 (2001), Democracies facing terrorism. The Secretary General of the Council of Europe has also highlighted the importance of multicultural and inter-religious dialogue in the long-term fight against terrorism“

⁴⁴ <http://www.un.org/en/terrorism/pdfs/radicalization.pdf>, Access: 25.05.2015

3.4. EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy

“The EU Counter-Terrorism Strategy” was adopted by the EU Council on 30 November 2005 considering the proposals of the Presidency of the Council of the EU and the Counter-Terrorism Coordinator.⁴⁵

In the introduction of the Strategy, it is expressed that terrorism is a threat to all States and to all people. In the Strategy, dialogue and alliance between cultures, faiths and civilizations are considered as essential elements in order to address radicalization resulting in terrorism: *Finally, working to resolve conflicts and promote good governance and democracy will be essential elements of the Strategy, as part of the dialogue and alliance between cultures, faiths and civilizations, in order to address the motivational and structural factors underpinning radicalization.*

In the first paragraph of the Prevent part, the focus is on countering radicalization and recruitment to terrorist groups and it is expressed that the main threats are Al Qaeda and the groups it inspires: *This strategy focuses on countering radicalization and recruitment to terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda and the groups it inspires, given that this type of terrorism currently represents the main threat to the Union as a whole.*

According to the Strategy; *There can be no excuse or impunity for terrorist acts. The vast majority of Europeans, irrespective of belief, do not accept extremist ideologies. Even amongst the small number that do, only a few turn to terrorism. The decision to become involved in terrorism varies from one individual to another, even though the motives behind such a decision are often similar. We must identify and counter the methods, propaganda and conditions through which people are drawn into terrorism.*

The Strategy rejects the clash of civilizations: *The propagation of a particular extremist worldview brings individuals to consider and justify violence. In the context of the most recent wave of terrorism, for example, the core of the issue is propaganda which distorts conflicts around the world as a supposed proof of a clash between the West and Islam. To address these issues, we need to ensure that voices of mainstream opinion prevail over those of extremism by engaging with civil society and faith groups that reject the ideas put forward by terrorists and extremists that incite violence. And we need to get our own message across more effectively, to change the perception of national and European policies. We must also ensure that our own policies do not exacerbate division. Developing a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues will support this.*

As “developing a non-emotive lexicon” for discussing the issues requires an unprejudiced approach towards the phenomenon of terrorism, the only way to achieve this is to put an end to the concepts and characterizations associating Islam and Muslims with terrorism.

The Strategy regards inter-cultural dialogue as an instrument to promote long-term integration within the context of activities outside the Union: *Within the Union these factors are not generally present but in individual segments of the population they may be. To counter this, outside the Union we must promote even more vigorously good governance, human rights, democracy as well as education and economic prosperity, and engage in conflict resolution. We must also target inequalities and discrimination where they exist and promote inter-cultural dialogue and long-term integration where appropriate.*

⁴⁵ For the English version of the Strategy see <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST+14469+2005+REV+4> , For Turkish version see: KDGM, Ulusal ve Uluslararası Terörle Mücadele Strateji Belgeleri, Ankara 2013 (p. 353-365)

The Strategy sets out seven key priorities for “Prevent” and among these priorities there are two which can be associated with Islamophobia:

- Develop inter-cultural dialogue within and outside the Union;
- Develop a non-emotive lexicon for discussing the issues.

3.5. National Strategies

3.5.1. US National Strategy for Counter-Terrorism

Published in 2011⁴⁶, the Strategy focuses on the fight against al-Qa‘ida and its affiliates. According to the Strategy; *The preeminent security threat to the United States continues to be from al-Qa‘ida and its affiliates- and adherents.*

Including a preface by President Obama, the Strategy also includes expressions criticizing the panic strategies pursued after September 11, 2001 and supports the strongly criticized idea of “war against terrorism” instead of “fight against terrorism”: *“ The United States deliberately uses the word “war” to describe our relentless campaign against al-Qa‘ida. However, this Administration has made it clear that we are not at war with the tactic of terrorism or the religion of Islam. We are at war with a specific organization—al-Qa‘ida.*

A decade after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, the United States remains at war with al-Qa‘ida. Although the United States did not seek this conflict, we remain committed, in conjunction with our partners worldwide, to disrupt, dismantle, and eventually defeat al-Qa‘ida and its affiliates and adherents to ensure the security of our citizens and interests.

The Strategy was published right after the event of the Arab Spring and regime changes. The Strategy approves these changes and expresses that support of the US for this change will contribute to fight against terrorism: *Laden’s persistent calls for violent regime change in the Arab World and perpetual violence against the United States and our allies as the method to empower Muslim populations stands in stark contrast to the nonviolent movements for change in the Middle East and North Africa. In just a few short months, those movements achieved far more political change than al-Qa‘ida’s years of violence, which has claimed thousands upon thousands of victims—most of them Muslim. Our support for the aspirations of people throughout the Middle East, North Africa, and around the world to live in peace and prosperity under representative governments stands in marked contrast to al-Qa‘ida’s dark and bankrupt worldview.*

Our approach to political change in the Middle East and North Africa illustrates that promoting representative and accountable governance is a core tenet of U.S. foreign policy and directly contributes to our CT goals.

However, it should be noted that the positive references to the Arab Spring in the context of fight against terrorism in the strategy are not applied in practice, actually some policies implemented are contrary to those expressions.

The Strategy also includes certain actions in order to disrupt al-Qa‘ida’s ideology and to prevent it from having supporters among Muslims under the chapter “Information and Ideas”: *We will continue to make it clear that the United States is not—and never will be—at war with Islam. We will focus on disrupting al-Qa‘ida’s ability to project its message across a range of media, challenge the legitimacy and accuracy of the assertions and behavior it advances, and promote a greater understanding of U.S. policies and actions and an alternative to al-Qa‘ida’s*

⁴⁶ See: https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/counterterrorism_strategy.pdf, Access: 15.05.2015

vision. We also will seek to amplify positive and influential messages that undermine the legitimacy of al-Qa'ida and its actions and contest its worldview. In some cases we may convey our ideas and messages through person-to-person engagement, other times through the power of social media, and in every case through the message of our deeds .

3.5.2. The United Kingdom Strategy for Countering Terrorism

The Strategy is dated 12 July 2011 and known as CONTEST in short.⁴⁷ In the foreword by Theresa May, the Home Secretary of that time, the threats the UK faces are listed as al-Qa'ida, its affiliates, associated groups and terrorists acting on their own – so called lone-wolves, and also threats from Northern Ireland related terrorism. This document focuses on the aforementioned three threats, particularly threats from al-Qa'ida, separately.

However, according to the Strategy document; *We will prioritize according to the risks we face and at present the greatest risk to our security comes from terrorism associated with Al Qa'ida and like-minded groups.*

Thus, the core of this document has been shaped within this framework. According to the document, *In common with the CONTEST strategy as a whole Prevent will address all forms of terrorism, but continue to prioritise resources according to the risks to our national security. At this stage its principal (but not its only) focus will therefore remain terrorism associated with Al Qa'ida and related groups*

The Strategy also points to Islamophobia in the context of radicalization: *“The grievances upon which propagandists can draw may be real or perceived, although clearly none of them justify terrorism. They include a perception of foreign policy, in particular towards the Muslim majority world; a sense and experience of Islamophobia; and counterterrorism powers, which have sometimes been regarded as discriminatory or disproportionate.”*

Radicalization is being driven by ideology, by a number of people who set out to disseminate these ideologies and by vulnerabilities in people which make them susceptible to a message of violence. Radicalisers exploit grievances; which (where Al Qa'ida inspired terrorism is concerned) include a perception of our foreign policy, the experience of Islamophobia and a broader view that the west is at war with Islam itself.

The Strategy expresses that actions in line with Islamophobia towards Muslims are effective in radicalization processes of counter-terrorism policies, which are disproportionate, however, proposals to prevent this result are not presented.

3.5.3 National Counter-Terrorism Strategy of the Netherlands

The strategy document⁴⁸ published in 2011 became distinct with its jihadist emphasis compared to other national strategies. According to the Strategy; *The number of terrorist attacks has increased, both nationally and globally, since the beginning of this millennium. These attacks have primarily come from jihadist quarters.*

⁴⁷ See. CONTEST, The United Kingdom's Strategy for Countering Terrorism, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/97995/strategy-contest.pdf access: 10.05.2015

⁴⁸ See: <https://www.counterextremism.org/resources/details/id/584/national-counter-terrorism-strategy-2011-2015>, Access: 10.05.2015

According to the Strategy; these days the target group is primarily jihadists. They constitute the most acute and probable future terrorist threat against the Netherlands and Dutch interests abroad. The joint efforts in the field of counterterrorism will therefore concentrate on this group.

As the jihadist concept as used in the Strategy does not refer to any existing organizations compared to the US and UK strategies, it remains more abstract and therefore it is difficult to understand the aim concretely. Also, the use of the word “jihad”, which is a multidimensional concept in Islam and Islamic law and which also means one’s effort to realize oneself, in association with terrorism is an approach which offends Muslims and serves for Islamophobic view in the Western public opinion.⁴⁹

The Strategy document makes a brief and practical definition of terrorism to be used by all parties involved in countering terrorism in the Netherlands; *Terrorism is the threat or preparation of, or the committing of, serious violence based on ideological motives against people, or deeds aimed at causing socially-disruptive material damage with the goal being to cause social change, to instil fear among the population or to influence political decision-making.*

Those who prepared the Strategy document also felt the necessity to emphasize the following: *“What this strategy is explicitly not intended to lead to, is a renewed ‘war against terrorism’, an initiative to combat specific religious minority groups or a Dutch contribution to the so-called ‘clash of civilisations’. The point of departure of this strategy is that terrorist crimes must be prevented and resisted, irrespective of the ideological basis on which they are committed.*

However, instead of emphasizing what it is not and what it doesn’t aim to serve for, the Strategy could have been a more objective and balanced text if it had highlighted counter-Islamophobic tools such as alliances of civilizations intercultural dialogue in order to stop activities that disturb Muslims.

3.54. Sweden National Counter-Terrorism Strategy

The Strategy dated 2012⁵⁰ sets out three main counter-terrorism methods: preventing, stopping and preparing. It covers all forms of terrorism and violent extremism, irrespective of the background or the motives of the terrorist threat.

The Strategy identifies the terrorist threat to Sweden as: *From an international perspective, most terrorist attacks occur in areas affected by conflict outside Europe. In Europe, local nationalist and separatist groups account for most of the attacks. Violent extremism in Sweden is often divided into three different types of environments: white power, left-wing autonomous movements and violent Islamic extremism. At present none of these three environments is a serious threat to the democratic system in Sweden. However, persons operating in these environments do subject individuals to threats or serious crimes.*

Most terrorist attacks still occur outside Europe in areas affected by conflict. Every year many civilians are hit by attacks in widely spread areas of the world such as regions of the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America.

⁴⁹ For a detailed study on this subject see: Hüseyin YILMAZ, *İslam Karşıtlığında (İslamofobi) Cihad Algısının Rolü, İslamofobi, Kolektif Bir Korkunun Anatomisi, Sempozyum Tebliğleri*, Ankara 2012, p.217-231

⁵⁰ See: <http://www.government.se/contentassets/68b06b9ece124c8e88df0d943ce4ecd7/swedens-national-counter-terrorism-strategy-skr.-20111273>, access: 11.05.2015.

The past decade have resulted in an increase in the intent and will among additional violent Islamists to support or commit terrorist acts.

In Norway in summer 2011 two large scale attacks that primarily had anti-Islamic overtones were carried out. The perpetrator in Norway appears to have planned and carried out the attacks on his own.

This Strategy is different than the other strategies as it uses concepts such as “violent Islamic extremism”, “Islamists” with “Islam”. Including those concepts used in media and political terminology also in the counter-terrorism strategy can only serve for those who make Islamophobic strategies as a part of their political strategies.

Also, the Strategy expresses that the ongoing works against Islamophobia can help to counter violent extremism: *“Government policies in other areas can help to counter violent extremism. In 2008 the Government initiated a dialogue on the fundamental values of society. The overall intention was to stimulate a dialogue on the principles of human rights and democracy, and a presentation was made in the Government Communication A dialogue on the fundamental values of society. An inquiry has been appointed to propose how work against xenophobia and similar forms of intolerance can be made more effective. One input to this inquiry is a survey of the state of knowledge and research concerning anti-Semitism and islamophobia conducted by the Living History Forum as a government assignment.”*

The Strategy also considers dialogue between cultures and societies as an important part of preventive work and refers to “Alliance of Civilizations”: *The activities being carried out for dialogue between cultures and societies can be another important part of preventive work. One example is the UN Alliance of Civilizations (UNAoC), an intergovernmental network that currently has more than 100 member countries and is engaged in open dialogue on inter-cultural issues.*

4. COUNTER-TERRORISM LANGUAGE AND APPROACHES FEEDING ISLAMOPHOBIA

It would not be incorrect to say that the most important sources that feeds Islamophobia today as it were in the past is are the circles that expressed their opposition to Islam and political agenda through certain concepts such as Islamic extremism and Islamic fundamentalism, Islamic terrorism and radical Islam.

The Ottoman intellectual and politician Ahmed Rıza wrote in his article published in *La Revue Occidentale* in 1896 in Paris and pointed out the following for that period: All national rebellions during the Ottoman Empire period, ranging from the first Greek rebellion to the Armenian riots, the massacres that are a shame of humanity and a violation of the rules of Islamic law are affiliated with the weakness of the government and the plots skillfully performed by certain foreign agencies. Superficial minds link those tragic acts with Islamic fanaticism (*fanatisme islamique*). *Religious hatred and political desires lie behind this formula that provokes the European public opinion in favor of Christian minorities but in reality against Muslims purely to disintegrate the Ottoman Empire.”*⁵¹

⁵¹ İsmayl URBAIN, Ahmed RIZA, Tolérance de l’Islam, Centre ABAAD, Paris 1992, p.93.

Those words of Ahmet Rıza reveal that the main sources that feed Islamophobia today in the US and Europe and the reasons behind Islamophobic campaigns are the same as they were 120 years ago.

However, in reality, when acts against human dignity are committed by any individual or group in any place of the world, the phenomena that must be objected to should be extremism, bigotry, fanaticism and terrorism, etc. Extremism and fanaticism are dangerous in any religion. Acts of terrorism committed by any person of any religion or nation should be condemned. However, terrorism should not be associated to any religion, political view and ethnic group. In fact, those who resort to such actions reveal themselves to be a fanatic of a certain religion or a view and have a hidden political agenda.

As concepts related to Islam or Muslims are always uttered together with negative concepts or with incidents such as terror, bombing, violence etc. in the media, after a while people experience a classical conditioning. Thus, a conditioned individual thinks about incidents such as blood, violence and bombing imprinted in their mind when they hear about concepts of Islam and Muslim and this situation results in fear of and anger against Islam and the Muslims.⁵²

According to the findings of a study by the Pew Research Center titled “Religion in Media: 2010”, Islam and Muslims had the majority coverage in the news about religion in the American media during 2010. There are two important details according to the findings of the research: rapid increase in the coverage about Muslims in the American media, particularly after 9/11 attacks and more violent content in the news about Muslims compared to other faiths.⁵³

Printed and visual publications which reflect Islam as a violent and warlike religion that does not allow other religions to exist causing non-Muslims who do not have sufficient and true information about Islam to be negatively affected by those publications result in Islamophobia.⁵⁴

However, associating Islam - which prohibits any forms of violence and aggression and defends mercy and tolerance - with terrorism, violence and blood and treating all Muslims as if they are potential terrorists just because the attackers of 9/11 were Muslim is an unfair, ill-minded, discriminating, exclusivist and biased attitude. It is expressed that the Christian Western world that identifies Islam with violence and terrorism should first face their past of violence, colonialism, the crusades and the inquisitions.⁵⁵

The American academician Arthur F. Buehler has a very interesting view on this matter: “Islamophobia is a psychological manifestation of the West’s long history of denying its own violence projected upon Islam and Muslims.⁵⁶ “It is an ungrounded fear of something/someone that does not exist in reality and which involves a psychological projection to create ‘the other’ as enemy. This phenomenon is a psychological defense mechanism involving the projection of what he refers to as ‘the West’s dark side’ onto Islam and its followers”⁵⁷.

In fact, when the extent of violence happened in the past of particularly the Western researchers and politicians who practically identifies Islam with violence is compared to the

⁵² KARSLI, *ibid*, p. 86

⁵³ Melih ÖZSÖZ, 13 Dakika 51 Saniye’de İslamofobi, İKV Değerlendirme Notu, 58, Ekim 2012, p.6.

⁵⁴ KARSLI, *ibid*, p.86

⁵⁵ KARSLI, *ibid*, p. 97

⁵⁶ BUEHLER, *ibid*, p.138

⁵⁷ BUEHLER, *ibid*, p. S.23

violent events and devastations happened in the Islam history so far, it will be seen that the rate of Islam-violence relationship remains very low.⁵⁸

It is obvious that questioning the consistency and motives of the organizations that resort to terrorist methods for whatever the reason might be – for example in the name of Islam, people and freedom - will help to identify and solve the problem and it is not right to characterize Islam with offending concepts. As to the number of its followers, Islam is the second largest religion in the world. It should not be forgotten that the number of Muslims who do not approve those who act in the name of Islam are in the millions.

Instead of categorizing the political, economic and military motives behind these actions, the mass media depicts all these events involving Muslims in some way as if events were conducted for religious motives. However, for example, violence in the name of religion in Israel, India, the US or Sri Lanka is rarely associated with the other members of that religion. Almost nothing is written about Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish and Christian terrorists around the world.⁵⁹

It is the cultural heritage that the West grows up in Islamophobia. Unfortunately, associating Muslims with violence is not a phenomenon witnessed only in the West. It is spreading via the mass media like a virus.⁶⁰

Another reason behind Islamophobia is the fact that well-known and well-trusted politicians, writers and religious figures use expressions associating Islam with terrorism.⁶¹ And this results in spreading the perception that Muslims are potential terrorists.

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights expresses that (...) *As a result of the fight against terrorism engaged since the events of 11 September 2001, certain groups of persons, notably Arabs, Jews, Muslims, certain asylum seekers, refugees and immigrants, certain visible minorities and persons perceived as belonging to such groups, have become particularly vulnerable to racism and/or to racial discrimination across many fields of public life including education, employment, housing, access to goods and services, access to public places and freedom of movement*".⁶² The Agency suggests the relationship between fight against terrorism and Islamophobia.

CONCLUSION

Islamophobia is a new notion used to define an old fear. Today, Islamophobia poses a threat to inter-civilization dialogue, cooperation and harmony, multiculturalism and the culture of living together. It also appears as an issue related to law and in particular the law on human rights due to discriminatory actions and violence.

In this context, it is crucial for officials and the media to use an appropriate language both in the national and international arena to prevent the spread of Islamophobia which has the risk of posing a threat similar to terrorism - as a threat to civil peace and internal security, and international and regional peace and stability.

⁵⁸ Adem ARAR, Tarihsel Tecrübe Olarak Merhamet ve Şiddet Açısından İslam, Şiddet Karşısında İslam, p. 380

⁵⁹ BUEHLER ibid, p.131.

⁶⁰ BUEHLER, ibid, p. 138

⁶¹ KARSLI, ibid, p.87

⁶² *Muslims in the European Union: Discrimination and Islamophobia*", Official website of EU Agency for Fundamental Rights: http://fra.europa.eu/sites/default/files/fra_uploads/156-Manifestations_EN.pdf, Access date: 27.09.2012.

Popularizing a discourse that may flame anti-Islamic sentiments in the media and public, and that may lead to racism and xenophobia is a serious problem in the context of the fight against terrorism.

It is obvious that we need efficient and integrated strategies both at international and national levels. Current international strategies discuss terrorism as a general problem and address Islamophobia indirectly through mentioning the dialogue of civilizations. Furthermore, they do not contain expressions encouraging inter-civilization and inter-cultural dialogue supporting the fight against Islamophobia. On the other hand, national strategies - that should be based on international strategies - solely or predominantly consider Muslim-related organizations as threats in the context of terrorist organizations and they may use notions that associate Islam with terrorism. Such strategies fail to support the fight against Islamophobia due to certain expressions associating Islam and terrorism. The national strategies of the United Kingdom and Sweden use the term Islamophobia in their national strategy documents. However, the concept is used to describe a phenomenon leading to radicalism, and comes up in a limited manner. Notions such as the Alliance of Civilizations, dialogue among cultures and beliefs - tools used in the fight against Islamophobia - cannot find coverage apart from the Swedish strategy.

The relationship between Islamophobia and terror has two basic dimensions. The first is pushing Muslims to extremisms such as violence due to discrimination and alienation. This dimension finds a place for itself in the national and international strategies to fight against terrorism and deals with preventive aspects. The second dimension concerns the terrorist actions by people under the influence of Islamophobic propaganda against Muslims or sometimes those accused of being tolerant towards Muslims. The desired level of progress in solving both the terror problem and Islamophobia cannot be achieved unless the second dimension is emphasized as well in counter-terrorism policies. Therefore, countries facing the terrorist threat are obliged to adopt an objective approach towards the issue of terrorism, and develop and implement integrated policies accordingly. In this regard, terrorism should be not be associated with any religion, ethnic group and ideology, and the values and delicate matters of faith groups. This is the only way to deplete these sources of abuse for the terrorists and to gain ground in the fight against terrorism. This will disrupt the environment leading to Islamophobic actions, and stop the expansion of Islamophobia. However the sincerity, determination and will of the Western countries are key.

While the Western countries endeavor to include the Muslim countries in the international cooperation to fight against terrorism, the same level of determination and will should be demonstrated in the fight against Islamophobia. Success in these two issues will undoubtedly prevent prejudices of the past from affecting today. This will pave the way to national, regional and international stability, peace, security and rule of law.

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