

Finnish Security
Intelligence Service

RIIS

Terrorism threat in 2010 and interim assessment

During recent years Europe has become a target area for global terrorist activity. What is worrying from the perspective of the security of our country is that these activities appear also to have secured a foothold in Northern Europe. In December 2010 our Nordic neighbours Sweden and Denmark were attacked by terrorists on their own soil.

Citing Sweden's military presence in Afghanistan and cartoonist Lars Vilks' cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed as the reasons for the attack, a Swedish citizen born in Iraq detonated a car bomb in Stockholm. In Denmark, four people were arrested towards the end of 2010 for planning a terrorist act; three of the suspects resided in Sweden and one in Denmark. The terrorist attack would have targeted the Copenhagen offices of Jyllands Posten, the newspaper responsible for publishing cartoons of Mohammed.

Despite the global war on terrorism, terrorism is showing no signs of abatement, let alone disappearance. In Finland, however, terrorism has not been a notable problem so far. The threat against Finland and Finnish interests remains minor. On the other hand, the recent events in Sweden and Denmark in particular demonstrate the importance of Finland taking measures aimed at revealing and preventing terrorism and activities supporting terrorism. We need to be able to detect the signs of threat in good time.

Security work and intelligence are key to combating

terrorism, but special consideration should also be given to the broad-based prevention of radicalisation, with outreach work targeting young people as one of its principal methods. The beginning of 2010 saw the birth of Finland's first National Counterterrorism Strategy, which defines the preparation for terrorism as part of society's overall security arrangements with due consideration being paid to the special characteristics of the threat. The authorities must have the capability for rapid reaction, because the situation may change rapidly, as shown by the events set in motion by the Mohammed cartoons.

The operations of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service are based on efficient preventive activities. Continued success in this task will require investments in information gathering, analysis and reporting in particular. During the past year we received additional counterterrorism funding for these particular tasks. The allocation of funding to Supo demonstrates the commitment of political leaders and top officials within internal affairs and police administration to tangible actions geared towards safeguarding the security of Finns. To allow the strategic objectives to be met, this funding should immediately be made a permanent part of the budget of Supo, the authority responsible for counterterrorism.

I have had the opportunity to act as the Director of Supo from 2007. These three years have been extremely interesting and challenging, even wearisome at times. When I started as Director, I chose three theses as my guiding principle: internationality, service-orientation and cautious openness.

Today, the Finnish Security Intelligence Service has an extensive cooperation network on nearly all continents. Without a network of friendly intelligence and security services, efficient counterterrorism efforts would be impossible. A go-it-alone strategy would be fatal for Finnish security. That being said, we obviously need to be vigilant when selecting partners. As said before, in an effort to increase the efficiency of our operations we stationed Supo liaison officers at Finnish missions abroad, for the first time in the history of the agency, in locations relevant for counterterrorism activities. This is a strategic choice that has already borne fruit and increased our esteem in the eyes of our partners.

Service-orientation refers to the ability to produce up-to-date information for top decision-makers, authorities and other interest groups on matters affecting the security of Finland, whether these involve internal circumstances, our neighbouring areas, or even distant crises that may have repercussions for Finland or the security of Finns. During the last three years our reporting has developed significantly, especially in terms of quantity but also in terms of quality. We have created a well-defined "service production" process. The field and desk officers gathering information in the field, the researchers and analysts reprocessing the information, and the officials finalising the reports form the absolute elite of Finnish security operators.

Cautious openness has manifested itself as the attempt to improve the approachability of the agency and its capacity to respond. We are eager to engage in public debate on matters pertaining to our sector. I doubt that there are many companies, authorities or

organisations that attract the same level of attention from the media as Supo. From time to time we are criticised for keeping some of our information under lock and key. Nonetheless, I am confident that the general public understands the importance of confidentiality for our operations. In Supo's line of business an incautious form of openness could lead to a dramatic decline in our operational performance.

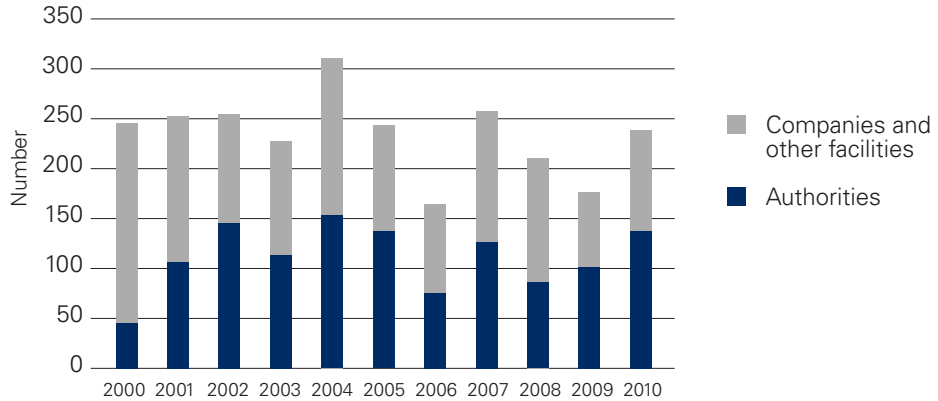
The recent changes in Supo's operations have been fairly extensive and also quite rapid on occasion. The increasingly open atmosphere has also brought out a degree of dissatisfaction, the sources of which need to be vigorously addressed by the management and the entire personnel. It should also be remembered that power and responsibility go hand in hand. Although the image portrayed in the public eye of internal conflicts has been greatly exaggerated and quite uncritical of the sources, dialogue should be further increased.

The overwhelming majority of highly motivated Supo personnel have been professional and committed in carrying out their duties. I would like to thank you all for your uncompromising work for the security of our country. You have been a world-class team to coach.

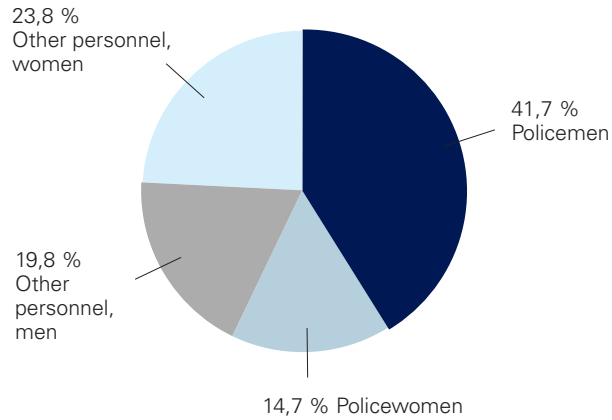
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ilkka Salmi', written in a cursive style.

Mr Ilkka Salmi, seventh Director of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service between 1 December 2007 and 15 February 2011. Salmi will be on a four-year leave of absence as the Director of the EU Situation Centre (SitCen) from 16 February 2011.

Briefings on preventive security work held by the Finnish Security Intelligence Service in 2009–2010



The division of posts at the Finnish Security Intelligence Service in 2010



Counterterrorism

In 2010 radical Islamic terrorists attempted several attacks against Europe and the United States. There were both known terrorist groups and individual persons behind these attempts. Security authorities in Europe and the United States successfully arrested several persons suspected of terrorist plans and attempted attacks.

In January 2010 a man with Somali background attempted to murder a Danish cartoonist in Denmark, and a radicalised Islamist woman knifed a Member of Parliament in Great Britain. In May a car bomb attack was thwarted in New York. Behind the attempt was a Pakistani man who had received terrorist training in Pakistan. The act was intended as a revenge for British involvement in the war in Iraq.

In July dozens of people, including an EU citizen, were killed in suicide attacks in Kampala, the capital of Uganda. Al-Shabaab, a Somali radical Islamic group pledging allegiance to al-Qaida, claimed responsibility for the attack. In August, three people were arrested in Norway for preparing a terrorist attack.

In September, information on planned attacks targeting Western countries obtained from terrorists

captured in Afghanistan and Pakistan led to the United States and some European countries raising their threat level for terrorist attacks. In September, a man from the North Caucasus was found to have been planning a terrorist attack in Copenhagen, Denmark. His likely intention was to attack Jyllands Posten, the newspaper that in 2005 published cartoons that offended Muslims. The bomb exploded prematurely as he was preparing for the attack.

At the end of October 2010 the al-Qaida of the Arabian Peninsula (AQ-AP) announced that it had built two bombs, hidden in ink cartridges, and shipped them from Yemen to the United States on cargo planes. The bombs were found and disarmed. In December, a terrorist attack planned by an Iraqi man failed in central Stockholm when the bomb carried by him exploded prematurely and another explosive, which had been placed in a vehicle, failed to detonate.

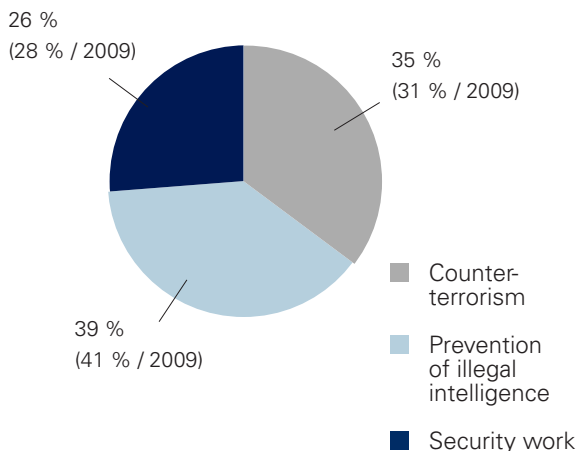
At the end of the same month, authorities in Sweden and Denmark arrested a four-strong group that was preparing an attack in Denmark. The authorities had long been following the group, which was also targeting the editorial office of Jyllands Posten with

the intention of causing as much damage as possible. In Sweden, also in December, two men with a Somali background were imprisoned for four years for planning a terrorist attack in Somalia.

Left-wing anarchistic terrorism made the headlines in November 2010 when Greek terrorists sent several letter bombs to embassies in Athens and to the heads of state of France, Germany and Italy. Previous terrorist attacks by Greek left-wing anarchists had targeted the country's authorities and political parties as well as foreign banks operating in the country.

The division of resources at the Finnish Security Intelligence Service in 2010

The percentages include also support functions



Terrorism threat assessment

The threat of terrorist attacks against Finland is at the moment small. There are in Finland however interests of some individual states that face a terrorist threat, and also international events taking place in our country are potential targets. Recently there have been indications that international terrorism poses a threat also the Nordic countries. Although the overall situation in Finland is good, the authorities must be aware that activities relating to terrorism may take place in Finland as well.

These terrorist attacks killed three people in 2010. In December 2010 the Swiss, Chilean and Greek embassies in Rome were subjected to letter bomb attacks that injured two employees. An Italian group of anarchists claimed responsibility for the acts.

In Europe, ethnic-nationalist terrorism was encountered mainly in Spain and Ireland. In Spain ETA, the terrorist group promoting independence of the Basque Country, declared a unilateral ceasefire in early September. The declaration is believed to be the result of the arrest of several ETA leaders in 2009 and 2010. In Northern Ireland, extreme republican groups within the IRA launched several bomb attacks.

Countering of illegal intelligence

In terms of both quantity and quality, the intelligence activities targeting Finland have remained unchanged for the past few years. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, intelligence activity began to increase in quantity in the mid-1990s and has now stabilised at the level of the early 2000s. Considering the size of the country, there is a fairly considerable presence of foreign intelligence service staff in Finland. Foreign intelligence services operational in Finland also often target other countries from Finland.

Intelligence operations are characterised by continuity and perseverance. The objectives of foreign intelligence are to anticipate trends in Finnish politics and to influence important decisions. Foreign states aim at exploiting the information obtained in Finland to promote their economic interests and scientific and technical development.

Intelligence officers are interested in Finland's security policy, relations with the EU and NATO, political decision-making, key high-technology industries, energy and trade policy, and the operations of security authorities. Finland is also interesting from the per-

spective of the increasing geopolitical importance of the Baltic Sea and Arctic Region.

Today, foreign intelligence officers rarely aim at establishing direct contacts with political decision-makers. Instead, they approach various experts, such as officials, researchers and journalists. In addition to gathering information, intelligence officers aim at exploiting their contacts for the publishing of the political views of their country along with other communications.

Political decision-makers and citizens often trust the opinions of experts, which makes influencing experts and their opinions sensible and, when successful, efficient from the perspective of foreign intelligence services.

Permanent targets for military intelligence include Finland's military capability, defence policy and international military cooperation as well as technological purchases that can be considered interesting from the military perspective.

Scientific and technical intelligence targets high-technology research and related concrete applications in particular. The main emphasis is on new research

areas, such as nanotechnology, nuclear technology, Finland's bilateral cooperation on innovation environments, and environmental issues relating to the Baltic Sea. The key industries attracting most attention are shipbuilding, the pharmaceutical and chemical industries, the energy sector, and agriculture and forestry.

Some states endeavour to monitor and control their citizens residing or staying in Finland. Such activities are called refugee espionage. Even though refugee espionage

is not currently a criminal offence under Finnish legislation, the counterespionage unit is monitoring the phenomenon.

In 2010 the Finnish Security Intelligence Service investigated in detail some intelligence operations of an unprecedentedly aggressive nature disclosed abroad, which Finnish official representatives, civil servants and businessmen had fallen victim to.

Non-proliferation on the increase

Finland's challenges in proliferation control pertain to combating espionage of technological know-how and also to attempts by countries potentially developing weapons of mass destruction to obtain dual-use goods. Certain countries developing nuclear weapons have attempted to obtain components required in their weapons programmes from Finland.

Supo's international exchange of information on proliferation control grew considerably in 2010. The number of preventive corporate visits also increased, and communications on the objectives of non-proliferation were more active than before. Completed in spring 2010, the non-proliferation information package compiled by Supo has attracted extensive interest and resulted in more companies contacting the authorities.

Security work

In 2010, the activities of moderate non-governmental organisations constituted the main channel for extra-parliamentary activism in Finland. Extremist movements and radical, illegal activities affecting State security were almost non-existent. Perhaps the greatest change over previous trends was the increase in xenophobia and right-wing extremism. Activities exploiting pronounced patriotism to solicit conflict with immigrants were encountered in both Western and Eastern Finland.

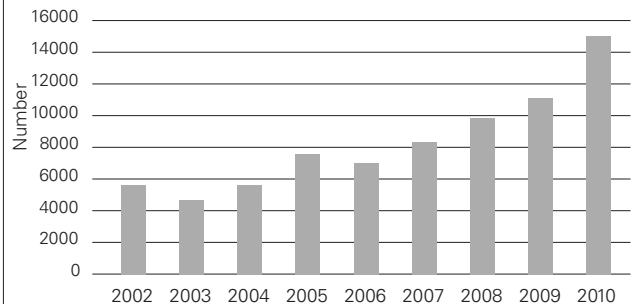
The incidence of illegal animal rights activism was minor. Activists focused their efforts on obtaining images and footage relating to animal abuse and maltreatment and on influencing public opinion through the media.

Environmental activists focused their efforts in 2010 on opposing the decision to build additional nuclear power plants. The demonstrations opposing the decision were peaceful. The most visible events included the "Ydinvoima historiaan" demonstration ('Farewell to Nuclear Power') in May and the "Olkiluoto Blockade" demonstration in August.

Supo actively monitored the impact of international organised crime and illegal immigration on Finland's security situation and participated in the drafting of several threat assessments.

Responsibility for the protection of the physical secu-

Security clearances conducted by Supo in 2002–2010



urity of the government and state visit delegations was transferred from the Finnish Security Intelligence Service to the National Traffic Police in July 2010. Supo has subsequently focused on assessing the government's security and on determining the security level of state visits and the drafting of related threat assessments. The security of the government remained more or less unchanged in 2010, although the number of threats made against politicians on the Internet was on the increase.

The number of personnel security clearances con-

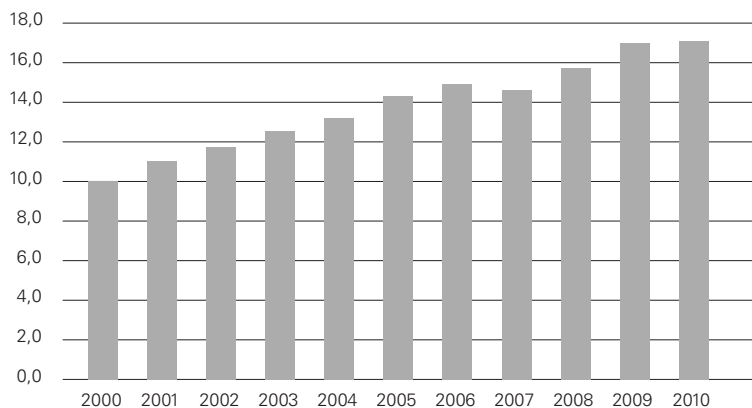
ducted by Supo has increased year by year; in 2010 a total of 14,955 security clearances were carried out. At the end of the year around 150 authorities and organisations were party to the security clearance procedure. Owing to organisational changes within State administration, this figure is not comparable to those of previous years.

The year 2010 was Supo's first operating year as the authority in charge of facility security clearances. In cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the

Ministry of Defence, the Defence Command and the Finnish Communications Regulatory Authority, Supo produced materials to be used as the basis of common operating practices in security issues, created harmonised policies and organised counselling events for companies.

Supo was closely involved in the ongoing Ministry of Justice project reforming the Security Clearance Act. Upon completion the new act will affect the security clearance procedure of Supo.

Costs of the activities of the Finnish Security Intelligence Service in 2000–2010 (million €)

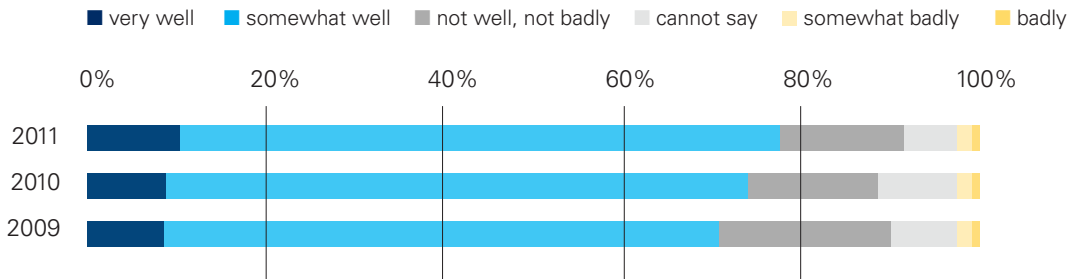


The costs of the activities have increased steadily during the last ten years: from ca. 10 million € to 17 million €. In 2010 the Parliament granted Supo an additional funding of 850 000 € for counterterrorism work.

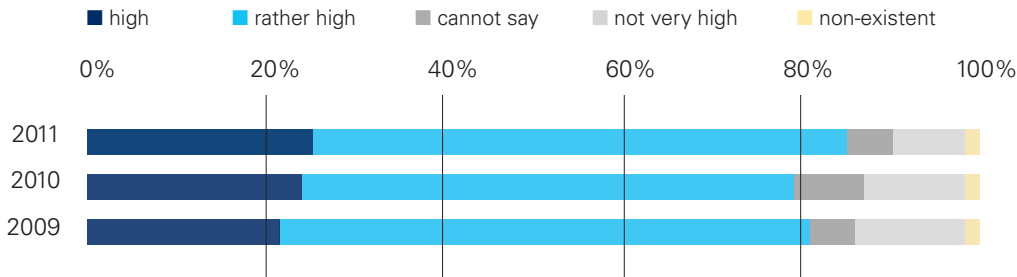
High confidence in Supo

A survey concerning the views of the citizens on Supo's activity is carried out yearly at Supo's request. The latest survey was conducted on 8 – 18 February 2011 and the sample was drawn from people aged 15 – 79 living outside the Åland Islands. A total of 1000 interviews were carried out. The confidence interval of the results is +/- 3 percentage points.

According to Finns, Supo has performed its duties either very well or somewhat well (78 %)



The majority (85 %) of the interviewed Finns said that their confidence in Supo is either high or rather high



SU
PO
2010

