

# Europol plans task force for Norway

Non-Islamic terror threats under microscope  
AP, London

In the wake of Norway's terrorist attack, the European police agency is setting up a task force of more than 50 experts to help northern European countries investigate non-Islamic terror threats, its spokesman told The Associated Press yesterday.

Soeren Pedersen said the group, which is based in The Hague, hopes to help Norway and nearby countries in their investigations in the coming weeks. He said Norway has not requested forensic experts but that Europol could provide them if needed.

"There is no doubt that the threat from Islamist terrorism is still valid," he said. "But there have actually been warnings that (right-wing groups) are getting more professional, more aggressive in the way they

attract others to their cause."

Since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, European countries have viewed Islamic terrorism as the primary threat.

But the fact the suspect in Friday's twin attacks turned out to be a Norwegian with right-wing views is raising questions about whether homegrown, non-Islamic terror threats have been neglected.

The alleged assailant was identified by Norway's national broadcaster as Anders Behring Breivik, 32.

In leaked diplomatic cables dating back to 2008, US diplomats warned that Norway seemed complacent about terror threats and criticised gaps in intelligence. The cables released by Wikileaks also give a snapshot of simmering anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic tensions in Norway.

## 'I played dead to stay alive'

An eye witness describes the horror tale

BBC ONLINE

A witness to Friday's shooting spree at a Norwegian island youth camp, which claimed at least 85 lives, has said he played dead to try and escape the gunman as he carried out the massacre.



Adrian Pracon

Adrian Pracon was on tiny Utoeya island, outside Oslo, when the attack began just hours after a bombing rocked the capital.

He described the event as follows:

I was working in the information booth. We were informed by radio of a bombing in Oslo, so we gathered all 700 people on the island together to tell them.

Then I went to the coffee shop to get supplies for everyone. I heard gun shots and could see people running.

People were falling dead right in front of me. I ran through the campus to the tent area. I saw the gunman - two people started to talk to him and two seconds later they were both shot. He was wearing a black uniform, with red edges. He looked like a Nazi.

The gunman was very sure, calm and controlled. He looked like he knew what he was

doing. He screamed at us that we would all die.

We all started to run down to the water, people had already undressed and started swimming. I started swimming in the rain, in my clothes and big boots.

I went for about 150 metres but the lake is about 800 metres long. I realised I wouldn't make it so I turned back.

I saw him standing 10 metres from me, shooting at the people who were swimming. He aimed his machine gun at me and I screamed at him, 'No please no, don't do it'. I don't know if he listened to me but he spared me.

He came back an hour later. I was with other survivors and we were lying down and hiding behind the trees and rocks. We were freezing in our wet clothes.

The shooting started again and people were falling on top of me, on my legs and falling into the water - that's when many people died. I just had to shield myself behind them, praying he wouldn't see me.

Then he came closer, I could feel his breath, I could feel his boots, I could feel the warmth of the barrel. 'I played dead to stay alive,' he said.



PHOTO: AFP



Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg (L) reacts as he embraces Eskil Pedersen, the leader of the Norwegian Labour Youth league and survivor of the Utoeya island shooting (top right), Norwegian royals light candles at the Oslo Cathedral (bottom right) and people gather outside the Cathedral to mourn and show their respect for the victims yesterday.



FAR RIGHT EXTREMISTS

## Dormant but not a spent force

BBC ONLINE

The man arrested following the attacks in Norway, Anders Behring Breivik, describes himself as a "nationalist", according to the police.

In the purest sense of the word, he is not alone. On this day of grief, Norwegian people have united under their flag, vowing to stand firm against terror.

But the suspect, it seems, is no pure nationalist. Instead, he is said

to be a right-wing extremist of the kind that police authorities in the West have feared for some time.

Their fear has been heightened by the potentially explosive mix of economic recession and unemployment, increasing racism and an ever stronger anti-Muslim sentiment, according to the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten.

Norway's security police reported a mild increase in right-wing extremist activity last year and predicted that

such activity would continue to increase throughout this year.

But it also suggested that the movement was weak, lacked a central leader and offered relatively modest growth potential.

Though members of the Norwegian far-right movement have carried out attacks in the past, it has historically been a small community, according to neo-Nazi watchers.

Since 1990, it seems Norwegian far-right extremists have created

stronger links with criminal communities, as well as with similar groups abroad, in Europe, Russia and the US.

Following the attacks in Oslo and on Utoeya, it will be interesting to see whether many in the country develop a more sophisticated view of where the greatest threats are coming from, amid a growing realisation that extremism is deadly regardless of nationality, ethnicity or religion.

## NEWS IN brief

### Canada returns Chinese fugitive

AFP, Beijing

Fugitive Chinese businessman Lai Changxing arrived in Beijing yesterday after being deported from Canada, ending a 12-year legal and diplomatic tug-of-war that tested the countries' relations.

Lai landed in the Chinese capital aboard a civilian flight in the custody of Canadian police and was handed over to authorities who arrested him, state television said, quoting a statement by the police ministry.

Canadian authorities moved swiftly to return Lai after a federal court on Thursday ruled he should be deported -- a move blocked for years by Canada's courts.

### Abbas rallies envoys on Palestinian statehood bid

AFP, Istanbul

Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas gathered his top diplomats in Istanbul yesterday, rallying them on their quest for statehood as he accused Israel of forcing them to take the campaign to the UN.

Peace talks between Israel and the Palestinians have been on hold for 10 months, shortly after Washington relaunched the first direct negotiations between the two sides for nearly two years.

And Abbas told the Istanbul meeting of Palestinian diplomats from around the world that the bid for UN membership was forced upon them by Israel's refusal to halt settlement building and end its occupation.

### Strong 6.5 quake hits Japan

AFP, Tokyo

A strong 6.4-magnitude earthquake hit northern Japan yesterday, but there were no reports of damage and no danger of a major tsunami, geologists said.

The quake struck at 1:34pm off the Pacific coast of Miyagi prefecture, around the same area as the giant March 11 earthquake and tsunami, the United States Geological Survey said. The Japan Meteorological Agency estimated the magnitude at 6.5.

The epicentre was 125 kilometres northeast of Sendai city, Miyagi's capital, the USGS said, estimating its depth at 35.7 kilometres.

### UN points to possible Syrian crimes against humanity

AFP, Damascus

UN officials have said Syrian security forces may have committed crimes against humanity in their crack-down on protesters, as at least eight more civilians were killed in massive protests against President Bashar al-Assad's rule.

The UN concerns were expressed in a statement late Friday by Francis Deng, special adviser to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on the prevention of genocide, and Edward Luck, the special adviser on the responsibility to protect.

### Rebel leader killed in South Sudan

REUTERS, Juba

A south Sudanese rebel leader was killed yesterday, the southern army and a separate rebel group said as Africa's newest nation is trying to quell violence threatening stability.

Gatluak Gai, one of several militia commanders in the south, was shot dead by his own group in Unity state after having earlier agreed on a cease-fire with the government, said Philip Aguer, spokesman for the southern army known as SPLA.

Aguer said Gai changed his mind about being integrated into the SPLA after agreeing to it earlier this week. The shooting started after an argument with his officers, he said.

But a separate rebel group said the SPLA had killed Gai. "Gatluak Gai has been killed by the SPLA. They shot him," spokesman Gatkuoth Kol said. South Sudan seceded from the north on July 9.

## Libya wants more talks with rebels, US

Nato strikes hit capital command centre

REUTERS, Tripoli

Libya is ready to hold more talks with the United States and with rebels trying to overthrow Muammar Gaddafi, but the Libyan leader will not bow to demands he quit, a government spokesman said.

Moussa Ibrahim said Libyan officials had a "productive dialogue" with US counterparts last week in a rare meeting that followed American recognition of the rebel government that hopes to end Gaddafi's 41-year rule.

"Other meetings in the future ... will help solve Libyan problems," the spokesman told reporters in Tripoli late on Friday. "We are willing to talk to the Americans more."

He said Gaddafi would not leave his position nor Libya.

Hours later Nato planes bombed targets in the capital, causing damage and casualties, Libyan state television said, without giving details.

Nato said it had hit a "command and control node."

A Reuters witness heard at least six blasts early yesterday, the largest to hit the capital in several weeks, four of them shaking the hotel hosting international media.

Rebel leader Mustafa Abdel Jalil said

Gaddafi must agree publicly to stand down before any talks could begin.

"There are no negotiations with this regime unless he declares his departure and that he is stepping down, he and his sons, from power," he said in a weekly statement to Libyans broadcast on rebel-run television.

As Gaddafi clings to power despite five months of civil war and a Nato bombing campaign authorised by a UN resolution, the West is increasingly hoping for a negotiated settlement.

But the United States also says Gaddafi must go.

Ibrahim said Libyan officials - but not Gaddafi himself - would be willing to hold further meetings with rebels, who now control roughly half of Libya, only on the government's terms.

"Nations do not negotiate with armed gangs," he said. Gaddafi is urging Libyans to persuade rebels to disarm and rejoin the loyal fold -- and to fight them if they don't.

His comments came as Libya reported a Nato airstrike near the eastern oil hub of Brega, the scene of recent fighting, which the government said killed six guards at a water plant.

### Nuclear scientist 'shot dead' in Iran

AFP, Tehran

An Iranian nuclear scientist was shot dead by unknown assailants on a motor cycle yesterday in Tehran, Iranian media reported.

The ISNA news agency identified the scientist as Dariush Rezaei, 35, an expert with links to the Atomic Energy Organisation of Iran.

Mehr said his wife was wounded in the shooting and rushed to hospital.

Several Iranian nuclear scientists have been murdered in recent years in attacks the Islamic republic has blamed on the United States and Israel, which suspect Iran's atomic programme masks a drive for a weapons capability.

## 2m Somalis out of aid groups' reach

REUTERS, El Adow, Kenya

Aid agencies are unable to reach more than two million Somalis facing starvation in the famine-struck Horn of Africa country where Islamist insurgents control much of the worst-hit areas, the UN's food agency said yesterday.

World Food Programme (WFP) officials said the areas of southern Somalia controlled by the al-Qaeda-linked al Shabaab, which imposed a ban on food aid in 2010, were among the most dangerous to operate in worldwide.

"There are 2.2 million people yet to be reached. It is the most dangerous environment we are working in the world. But people are dying. It's not about politics, it's about saving lives now," Josette Sheeran, WFP's executive director, told agency staff and reporters in northeastern Kenya.

The drought gripping the region straddling Somalia, Kenya and Ethiopia is the worst for 20 years and is affecting some 10 million people, the United Nations says. In southern Somalia, 3.7 million people risk starvation.

WFP was among several groups ordered out of rebel-held areas last year who were now preparing to return. A WFP official briefing Sheeran said the agency was considering food drops from aircraft in regions inaccessible by land.

Aid groups also face landmines in the border areas where al Shabaab clashed with Kenyan and Ethiopian forces earlier this year, said Regis Chapman, WFP Somalia's head of programme.

### Nato hands control of key Afghan city

AFP, Mazar-i-sharif

Nato troops yesterday handed control of Afghanistan's northern capital Mazar-i-Sharif to local forces amid rising security fears just days after it was hit by a deadly bombing.

Mazar-i-Sharif is the sixth of seven areas to transition to Afghan control, but critics say the timetable is politically motivated and scepticism is running high over Afghan abilities to ward off a trenchant Taliban insurgency.

A handover ceremony was held at the Afghan army's headquarters, attended by cabinet ministers and the German ambassador, with a Nato flag lowered and an Afghan flag raised after local soldiers sung the national anthem.

## James Murdoch has questions to answer

Says British PM

AFP, London

A British lawmaker referred James Murdoch to police Friday over claims of misleading parliament on the phone-hacking scandal as Prime Minister David Cameron said the media boss had "questions to answer".

David Cameron -- who has himself been under pressure over his decision to hire former News of the World editor Andy Coulson as his media chief, later arrested over allegations of phone hacking and bribing police -- said he must explain himself.

"Clearly James Murdoch has got questions to answer in parliament and I am sure that he will do that. And clearly News International has got some big issues to deal with and a mess to clear up," the prime minister said.

James Murdoch, the chairman of News International, the British newspaper division of his father Rupert's global media empire, has been challenged over evidence he gave to lawmakers on Tuesday.

Before parliament's media scrutiny committee, James Murdoch said on Tuesday that when authorising an out-of-court settlement to a voicemail hacking victim, he was unaware of an email that suggested hacking at the now-shuttered News of the World went wider than one rogue reporter.

But Colin Myler, the last editor of the News of the World, and Tom Crone, the former News International legal manager, broke ranks on Thursday to say James Murdoch's recollection of events in 2008 was "mistaken".

The development put the spotlight back on the Murdochs just as the scandal seemed to be spreading to other British newspapers, having already dragged in the police and politicians, even embroiling Cameron himself.

## Singer Amy Winehouse found dead

AFP, London

Troubled British singer Amy Winehouse has been found dead at her flat in north London, police said yesterday. She was 27 years old.

The Grammy award-winning soul singer struggled with well-documented drink and drug addictions. Her death is being treated as unexplained.

"Police were called by London Ambulance Service to an address in Camden Square shortly before 4:05 pm today, Saturday 23 July, following reports of a woman found deceased," a police statement said.

London Ambulance Service had been called to the flat at 3:54pm and sent two ambulances.

Winehouse rocketed to fame after winning five Grammy awards off the back of her 2006 second album "Back to Black" and the hit single "Rehab".

In the run-up to her live return, Winehouse spent a week at an addiction treatment clinic in London, reportedly at the suggestion of her father, Mitch, over concerns that she was drinking too much before her shows.

In her continuing European tour, she was booted at the opening performance in Belgrade on June 18, as she appeared to be too drunk to sing.

