

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002059/24
to the Commission
Tomas Tobé (PPE)
(14 October 2024)**

Subject: Iran's use of criminal networks as terrorist proxies in Europe

The Iranian regime's use of criminal networks as terrorist proxies in Europe poses a grave threat to our internal security.

The Swedish Security Service confirmed earlier this year that the Iranian regime has been using criminal networks in Sweden to carry out violent acts against other states, groups, or individuals in Sweden that Iran regards as threats ⁽¹⁾. Similar reports have been made in several other European countries ⁽²⁾.

Iran's hostile activities abroad are not a new phenomenon. The European Parliament has repeatedly called for the EU to take action against the Iranian regime, including by adding the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to the EU terrorist list ⁽³⁾.

However, it is clear that further measures are needed at EU level to target the links between the Iranian regime and criminal networks that operate across borders in Europe.

In view of the above:

What action does the Commission intend to take to help Member States prevent, avert, and reduce the possibility of Iran and other hostile state actors carrying out security-threatening activities in the EU?

Submitted: 14.10.2024

**Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles on behalf of the European Commission
(27 November 2024)**

The EU is aware of the very disturbing reports about increased illegal and security-threatening activities of Iranian state bodies on the European territory.

The EU position and actions will continue to be based on the outcomes of investigations and legal proceedings conducted by the competent national authorities who are responsible to establish facts, culpabilities and the level of threat in line with their national legal order. The EU relies on national authorities to complete the respective ongoing investigations and prosecutions into recent cases.

The EU remains vigilant and continues to coordinate policies at the level of its 27 Member States, as well as ensuring an appropriate collective response where national processes are completed.

In this regard, the EU has put in place sanctions regimes to target all aspects of Iran's negative behaviour and will continue to use them whenever appropriate.

¹ <https://sakerhetspolisen.se/ovriga-sidor/other-languages/english-engelska/press-room/news/news/2024-05-30-iran-is-using-criminal-networks-in-sweden.html>
² <https://www.counterterrorismgroup.com/post/psa-iran-using-organised-criminal-gangs-in-sweden-as-proxies-to-attack-israeli-and-jewish-targets-p>
³ https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2024-0382_EN.html