

Denmark Briefing: October and November 2023

Reporting period: 1st October – 30th November 2023

Danish response to Al Aqsa Flood and Israeli war on Gaza follows template of Western countries, defending Israel and criminalising Palestine solidarity

- On October 7th the Danish Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen reacted to the Al Aqsa Flood Operation by writing on her [social media accounts](#) that Denmark stands behind Israel and that it was “yet another pointless attack on Israel”.
- Frederiksen was criticised for shutting down critical questions from a journalist, on whether she would also lay flowers for Palestinian civilian casualties, as she had done for Israeli casualties.

She affirmed Israel’s ‘right to defend itself’ and [retorted](#) that “I must admit that I think you are contributing to relativising something that is not comparable. It is Hamas - a terrorist organisation - attacking a democratic country, Israel. Israel has the right to defend itself, and that will mean some casualties. There is no comparison, and the fact that a Danish journalist is asking the question is deeply worrying to me, I would like to say, and completely ahistorical”.

- Frederiksen has also [stated](#) that she wants to examine whether pro-Palestinian protests encourage terrorism.

On November 9th she addressed a [letter](#) to the Minister of Justice, Peter Hummelgaard, claiming that she has witnessed “disturbing behavior in Denmark that is fueled by the conflict”, which “clearly shows that there are people in Denmark who have not embraced our Danish values”.

She requested that his ministry prepare a report on “ how the police and prosecutors use the criminal law protection against, among other things, incitement to and approval of terrorism, etc. in connection with the recent demonstrations and public statements in relation to the conflict in Israel and Gaza.”

- In the subsequent [report](#) by the Minister of Justice, he stated that the Danish Security and Intelligence Service has found it necessary to issue new operational recommendations to the Danish police, stating: "Developments in the conflict in Israel and Gaza have created a renewed focus on this [i.e. security for Jewish and Israeli interests], which has led PET to prepare a number of operational recommendations to the police on...increased attention to security around Israeli, Jewish and Palestinian interests and activities in Denmark". So far, the



police have filed two charges of [terrorism](#) offenses towards pro-Palestinian statements.

- According to the Danish Security and Intelligence Service (PET) and the Danish government they are keeping a close eye on what is written on [social media](#) as well as the [protests](#), as they claim both can lead to radicalisation in Denmark.
- A Danish politician from the opposition Liberal Alliance, Henrik Dahl, has [criticised](#) several researchers and experts that signed a letter back in 2021, saying that Israel is an Apartheid state and encouraging people to boycott Israel.

The politician claims that the 35 signatories cannot be used as “experts” on Middle East issues, as they are not sufficiently objective and neutral to explain what is going on in the region.

- After pro-Israel viewers complained to Denmark's national public service company, an editor from DR wrote a [statement](#) emphasising that one specific expert would only be featured in news segments on the situation in Palestine/Israel with a declaration of his pro-Palestine stances in the past.

An MP from the Social Democrats has also [criticised](#) an academic who is an expert on militant Islamist movements, for trying to raise nuances around Hamas.