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Counter-terrorism/National Security

Operation Luxor survivor detained in Egypt despite Austrian case being dismissed

- An unjustly targeted Egyptian Imam of a Graz Mosque, who survived the repressive Operation Luxor raid, found himself detained upon entering Egypt due to the accusation made by the Austrian government amidst the operation - namely, that he was accused of being a member of the Muslim Brotherhood (designated a terrorist organisation in Egypt).
- Now his case was [dismissed in Austria by the OLG](#) due to the lack of grounds for the accusations, while the Imam is still detained in Egypt - indicating the far-reaching consequences of the politically-motivated operation.

Documentation Center for Political Islam publishes a new report falsely accusing *Dar-Al Janub* of "Political Islam from the Left"

- The [Documentation Center for Political Islam has released a new report titled "Political Islam from the Left"](#) accusing Dar-Al Janub of sympathising with and being close to Hamas, which is proscribed in Austria.

Dar-Al Janub is an NGO, specifically a pro-Palestinian organisation.

- It's crucial to note that the Documentation Center for Political Islam is a government-funded institution with the primary objective of monitoring and criminalising Muslims in Austria.
- The publication of this report has triggered [a media frenzy against Dar-Al Janub](#), leading to threats and attacks. Legal consequences may follow, as seen in previous instances.

Notably, this report surfaced shortly after the dissolution and banning of the pro-Palestinian Samidoun network in Germany. Given that the report links Dar-Al Janub to Samidoun, it suggests a pattern where the Austrian government aims to criminalise and take legal actions against pro-Palestinian organisations.

This case also sheds light on how racist and Islamophobic networks collaborate to export oppressive and discriminatory actions across borders.

First Austrian Islam Conference focuses on anti-Semitism, bolstering Austrian government's pro-Israel stance

- The 'Austrian Islam Conference' (AIC), fashioned after a German counterpart, was introduced by Mouhanad Khorchide - a figure deeply involved in Austria's recent securitisation measures against Muslims and involved in the Documentation Center political Islam.
- With a hefty €250,000 in funding from an EU source, through the Austrian Federal Chancellery, the AIC supposedly seeks a dialogue involving various stakeholders from various fields, while being unable to garner any actually noteworthy participation from within the Muslim community.
- However, the [AIC's delayed and oddly-chosen inaugural conference in December 2023, focusing on anti-Semitism](#), has raised eyebrows. This peculiar choice deviates conspicuously from the anticipated discussions on Islam and instead appears to set a tone. It becomes apparent that the AIC may function as a mechanism to control and shape the Islamic and Muslim discourse, particularly on issues related to Palestine and Israel.
- The selection of anti-Semitism as the initial theme hints at a potential agenda to censor and manipulate the narrative, favoring the Austrian government's pro-Israel stance.

Counter-terrorism/National Security

This strategic move could be an attempt to stifle any dissenting opinions within the Muslim community and tighten control over discussions regarding Israel, ultimately aligning them with the Austrian government's preferences.

It also appears to exert pressure on the IGGÖ (Austrian Islamic Religious Community), responsible for Islam classes in schools and mosques, potentially aiming to align their teachings about Israel with the Austrian government's preferences.

Re-election of IGGÖ (Austrian Islamic Religious Community) president, allegedly backed by government ministry, challenged

The [re-election of Ümit Vural as the President of the Islamic Religious Community in Austria \(IGGÖ\) is being contested](#).

The elections held on December 2, 2023, are claimed to have been conducted unlawfully, and the Al-Taqlwa Kultusgemeinde of the IGGÖ has officially challenged the results.

The contesting party alleges that President Vural has abused his position and violated the rights of thousands of members and affiliated communities within the IGGÖ.

- During Vural's five-year term, he gained a reputation for suppressing criticism, systematically removing dissenting voices. For instance, a [member of the Supreme Council critical of the President's actions was removed during Vural's tenure](#).

The Al-Taqlwa Kultusgemeinde, operating twelve mosques nationwide, has [faced attempts at dissolution](#) due to its critical stance on the President's actions - a matter currently before the Administrative Court in Vienna.

- [Critics](#) argue that Vural's methods create an environment where dissenting voices are eliminated, allowing him to secure overwhelming support in elections. The allegations include interference by the state authority responsible for religious affairs, claiming that the Kultusamt (a government ministry) not only remains silent on such abuses but provides legal advice to President Vural on how to dissolve his critics.

This specifically came to light in the [attempt to unlawfully dissolve the Al-Taqlwa Kultusgemeinde, where the Kultusamt allegedly offered suggestions on how to proceed](#).

- Several constitutional violations within the IGGÖ are highlighted in the contested elections, including the exclusion of all delegates from certain Kultusgemeinden, such as Al-Taqlwa, from participating in the elections and the absence of representation for certain Kultusgemeinden in the Supreme Council.