

THE NETHERLANDS BRIEFING

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Collapse of Schoof I Cabinet over Asylum Policy

The right-wing coalition led by Prime minister Dick Schoof collapsed after 11 months in power. The collapse was triggered by the right-wing leader of the Party for Freedom (PVV) Geert Wilders, who withdrew from the coalition following a dispute over asylum measures. Wilders demanded hardline policies such as the immediate closure of borders and the deportation of 60,000 Syrians. Other coalition partners rejected these demands as they were deemed incompatible with European and International Law. Right-wing party leaders such as Yesilgöz (VVD) criticized Wilders cynical and performative exit, stating that during the talks, Geert Wilders did not even discuss the asylum demands, which Yesilgöz was prepared to talk about. Political analysts and ex-PVV MPs later discussed the exit of Geert Wilders over the asylum issues was a convenient trigger to let the incompatible and dysfunctional coalition collapse without too much backlash from their voters, as the PVV was unable to translate its radical campaign promises into viable policies. Politicologists pointed out that because Wilders has been an opposition politician for the past 20 years that thrived on polarisation, surveys suggested supporters of the PVV were increasingly unhappy with the perceived incompetence due to broken promises and compromises which resulted in a drop in the polls. Geert Wilders responded to this alienation of its voter base by choosing to let the government fall over the issue of asylum — PVV’s core theme — instead of other domains which deadlocked Schoof I such as the nitrogen crisis, housing shortage or defence budget increases.

Taubah Mosque Ruling

In late July 2024, a legal precedent was set by the District Court of Midden-Nederland, known as the [‘Taubah Mosque Case’](#). The court explicitly ruled that covert investigations conducted by local municipalities into local mosques and the broader Muslim community were unlawful. For several years, it was known that municipalities funded by the National Coordinator for

Security and Counterterrorism (NCTV) had been using private companies to secretly investigate Islamic communities to map potential “radicalisation risks.” Researchers gathered sensitive personal data which included names, photographs in combination with religious and political opinions — without the knowledge or consent of the people being monitored. These reports were then shared with national ministries and intelligence services. After the Taubah Mosque leadership discovered this, they demanded full access to the report to see what had been recorded about their community. The municipality of Veenendaal refused, citing privacy reasons, which prompted the mosque to take the matter to court. The court dismantled the municipality’s defence concluding there was no legal basis for municipalities to run secret intelligence operations. Collecting and sharing such sensitive data without consent or a concrete, individualised legal mandate is a severe breach of human rights.

The municipality applied a “better safe than sorry” logic to justify spying on local, innocent Muslims which shows how normalised it is to treat an entire religious minority with collective suspicion. The ‘Taubah ruling’ sets a critical legal precedent that religious minorities are entitled to the exact same civil liberties and protections from state overreach as any other citizen, vague “security” [concerns do not override constitutional rights](#).

Directly following this judicial pushback against unlawful surveillance, the Dutch Data Protection Authority took regulatory action, imposing fines totalling €250,000 across ten different Dutch municipalities.

Dutch-Israel relations after collapse Schoof I

Following the collapse of the coalition, the Netherlands was ruled by a ‘demissionary cabinet’ which is allowed to manage ongoing affairs and urgent matters during a transitional period. It maintains daily operations, handles urgent negotiations and manages national crises while avoiding controversial, long-term policy decision until a new coalition is formed.

Relations between the Netherlands and the Israeli entity were highly turbulent. As of 1 May 2025, 48% of Dutch citizens hold the opinion that Israel was committing genocide in Gaza. 39% think the Netherlands should take action against Israel, while 16% think the current direction is correct and 8% believes the Netherlands should support Israel more. 51% of Dutch citizens are in favour of a total ban on products from Israeli settlements, while 43% thinks [the Netherland should introduce broader economic sanctions](#). Despite this huge shift in opinion against the Israeli state, the Dutch government does not seem to change its policy and remains supportive of the regime.

The Dutch government has struggled to maintain its historically staunch support for Israel while facing immense domestic and international pressure over the catastrophic genocide conducted by Israel. In July 2025 Dick Schoof found himself in a painful public dispute with Israeli President Isaac Herzog. Following a meeting between the two, Schoof posted a statement on X about the situation in Gaza, only to be publicly rebuked by Herzog who states the Dutch PM had failed to reflect the “spirit and details” of their [conversation which surrounded the hostages held by Hamas](#). This blunder shows the struggle of the Dutch

government – on one hand they wanted to publicly show how they care for the situation in Gaza, while in actuality providing full support to its annihilation during diplomatic talks. This sentiment is mirrored by the decision to implement a “discouragement policy” after the advisory opinion by the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in July 2024, which declared Israel’s occupation of Palestinian territories unlawful.

Starting in July 2025, the government formally escalated its policy by “actively warning” Dutch businesses of the legal and financial [risks of doing business in the West Bank](#). In practice, this has had no effect and no companies up until now have been fined for their involvement in the trade with illegal Israeli settlements. Following “heavy” pressure from left-wing opposition parties and human rights groups, the Netherlands became a reluctant proponent in Brussels for reassessing the EU-Israel Association Agreement. The Netherlands argued that the renewal of the pact ought to be conditional and stated that the Netherlands could not support frictionless trade unless Israel adhered strictly to the human rights clauses embedded in the agreement, specifically [regarding the blockage of the humanitarian aid into Gaza](#). In practice, the agreement remained fully active and functional. Israeli exports continued to enter the European market without tariffs or quotas. Israeli universities, defence contractors, and tech firms continued to successfully apply for and receive millions of euros in European research grants. This included funding for dual-use technologies (technologies with both civilian and military applications), such as drone software and surveillance AI, which continued unchanged. Which allowed the use of Dutch Data centres to be used for intercepting Palestinian phone calls as well as [directly facilitating the bombardment of Gaza](#).

In parliamentary debates regarding the ongoing siege of Gaza, Schoof repeatedly refused the opposition’s demand to explicitly condemn Israel’s military actions. The government stuck to the phrasing that it was “extremely concerned,” and “continued to monitor the situation,” drawing increasing accusations from the press as well as opposition leaders of granting the Israeli regime a carte blanche to continue its genocide.

The disregard of Palestinian lives by the government was echoed by the Dutch Crown. Besides the immediacy of showing their support for the Israeli State two days after the attacks of 7 October 2023 and refusal to mention Palestinians in the years after, the king also visited a synagogue in Amsterdam that — with the king present — referred to the Palestinian territories as “Judea” and “Samaria,” denying the Palestinians their identity as well as [praying for the Israeli soldiers occupying the Palestinian lands](#).

New Wine in Old Wineskins

After four months of negotiations the new government was sworn in on 23 February 2026. The Jetten cabinet, lauded by many progressive voices in the Netherlands consists of the big winner of the 2025 election the social-liberal Democrats 66 (D66) as well as a member of the previous Schoof cabinet; the conservative liberal People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD). The VVD has been highly uncritical of the Israelis genocide and is responsible for many Islamophobic laws, including the introduction of a bill to monitor informal, after-school

education. This bill encompasses a massive range of extracurricular activities, from Islamic weekend schools and Christian Sunday schools to secular organisations like scouting or youth theatre. However, the reasoning behind it, was a 2019 investigative report that revealed some alleged-Salafi Qur'an schools were teaching children that “non-believers deserved the death penalty.” Later it was discovered that some Chinese weekend schools were teaching state propaganda. The proposed law would create a special commission to follow up and investigate weekend schools after (anonymous) reports of “radicalisation” or “undermining democratic values.” If deemed necessary, the inspectors could intervene by banning materials or shutting down institutions.

The VVD, a liberal party, introduced a tool for the government to overreach and step “behind the front door” of citizens, and allow it to create a surveillance framework for all informal education. Major institutions and human rights groups heavily criticised the bill, warning it is legally vague, [stigmatising and a severe threat to constitutional freedoms](#). D66 however, has been outspoken of Israel's genocide, its then-party leader now-Prime Minister Rob Jetten even joined one of the “Red line demonstrations,” where an estimated 250,000 participants called for sanctions against Israel. However, [Jetten voted against the recognition of the Palestinian State](#) and explicitly mentioned his concerns regarding Islamic communities and their issues with antisemitism and homophobia, steering away from his campaign rhetoric, and copying his coalition partner's political theatrics by visiting iftars on Monday evening to use the Islamic community as scape goat on Tuesday morning, proving Jetten tries to put new wine in old wineskins.

The Muslim Brotherhood

In mid-March 2026, the Dutch House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer) passed a parliamentary motion calling on the government to ban the Muslim Brotherhood and “its affiliated organizations” in the Netherlands. This motion reminds us that the legislative agenda regarding Dutch Muslims continues to be shaped by suspicion, state overreach and political theatrics.

In mid-March 2026, Geert Wilders and the Party for Freedom (PVV)—operating as opposition after its deliberate collapse over the asylum policy—initiated a parliamentary motion demanding the government to ban the Muslim Brotherhood and its affiliated organisations. The motion passed with a narrow majority of 76 votes, relying mostly on the support of the VVD, which is part of the Jetten cabinet. Using the Muslim Brotherhood as a politically charged ‘container concept,’ the PVV forced the VVD and other right-wing parties to vote in favour of the ban to avoid appearing “soft on Islamism”. Despite not being part of Jetten I, the PVV continues to leverage Islamophobia to dictate the parameters of the political landscape of the Netherlands.

The primary controversy surrounding the motion is the incompatibility with the Dutch constitutional framework. The Muslim Brotherhood is not a registered corporation, a hierarchical organisation or legal entity in the Netherlands, making the ban almost impossible to enact. Legal experts and human rights organisations have warned that this essentially is the

banning of an ideology by deliberately utilising vague legal jargon. Much like VVD's push to monitor informal weekend schools, the push for this ban provides the state with a legally ambiguous tool to overreach behind the front door of Dutch Muslims. Another controversy lies in the fact that the Dutch General Intelligence and Security Service (AIVD) has spoken about the Muslim Brotherhood in 2011, stating that "the Egyptian organisation" poses no direct, violent threat to the democratic legal order, despite the [ongoing tension in Egypt](#). Therefore this motion bypasses the requirement of demonstrating imminent violence in order to ban a group, applying the same "better safe than sorry" logic used in the Taubah Mosque case. While D66 campaigned on the restoration of the rule of law and protection of minority rights against the radical right, the cabinet is now tasked with implementing the mechanisms to execute the ban. Instead of following up on the promise of protection, by drawing a hard line against the motion, Jetten's cabinet chose for a bureaucratic delay, announcing an "extensive legal review" to see how the motion could be translated into policy without violating international law.

In practice, even if the legal review concludes that the ban is constitutionally impossible, the political damage against Dutch Muslims has already been done. By keeping the myth of the unstoppable tide of Islam with its conniving Trojan Horse 'the Muslim Brotherhood' alive, the Dutch Muslim—once again—functions as a scapegoat to have draconian laws enacted. The mere threat of being labelled a "Brotherhood affiliate" coerces Islamic civil society to retreat into double-think. Ultimately, the motion serves as another tool for the state to enforce its institutionalised suspicion. By using an abstract, floating signifier, the state creates an environment of vicarious liability that limits the community's political and religious agency. The Islamic community (and society in general) is now coerced to sanitise its political and religious discourse, effectively forcing Dutch Muslims from the global Islamic sphere out of fear that international aid or shared literature will be reclassified as a national security threat. Regardless of whether the ban will be enacted or not, the Overton window already successfully shifted far enough that the state allows this collective suspicion of Muslim citizens to be amplified by members of the current cabinet.