

Rivlin: The Islamic State is already here, within Israel

Rivlin addressed the INSS conference stressing the need for law enforcement to isolate and firmly handle violent Arab extremists.

By Shoshana Miskin / First Publish: 1/18/2016, 9:38 PM

President Reuven Rivlin addressed on Monday the ninth **annual Institute for National Security Studies (INSS)** conference, and focused on the threat of terrorist organizations, in particular the Islamic State (ISIS), among the Israeli Arab population.

"The Islamic State is already here, that is no longer a secret. I am not speaking about territories bordering the State of Israel, but within the State itself," said the President, "Research studies, arrests, testimonies, and overt and covert analyses – many by the INSS – clearly indicate that there is increasing support for the Islamic State among Israeli Arabs, while some are actually joining ISIS."

He described the growing sympathy with ISIS on social media, while more moderate individuals feel threatened. "Anyone familiar with Arab society knows that in recent years there has been considerable radicalization on the issue of the implementation of the Sharia law – even in areas and groups identified as secular, we are today seeing the influence of extremist ideas."

He continued to explain how the problem of ISIS is not unique to Israel alone saying, "It is not a consequence of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, perhaps even the contrary. It is not possible to draw a clear political and geographic line of the 'axis of evil' around which we can focus our forces or the enemy."

Rivlin went on to speak of the global vision of ISIS which continues to recruit so many young people around the world, asserting "ISIS proposes a global approach. A global vision. A religious identity not dependent on ethnic or geographic boundaries, motivated by the evil ideas of the Islamic State and its fighters"

The president described the evil of ISIS an "altruistic evil" – an evil perpetrated in the name of and on behalf of, a great and sanctified purpose. He called it a "holy evil" which celebrates its malevolence through brutal executions, abuse, the willingness to die, the willingness to kill, as "tests of initiation" to the movement.

While emphasizing that he has not intended to accuse the Israeli Arab community, the President stressed he will demand the community and its leaders take responsibility and condemn extremism as it has not yet done.

"I do not for a moment deny the responsibility of Arab leadership. Their condemnations indicate, above all else, fear. More serious than this are those voices that blame the 'occupation' as the source of all troubles, while displaying sympathy and understanding for attacks on innocents," said Rivlin.

He further noted that ISIS is garnering support in Germany or in France, yet there is no "occupation" in either of those countries.

While expressing that abandoning the Arab community to deal alone with the growing threat of ISIS is not the ideal solution, Rivlin stressed that there was still much to be done, and noted the key role of the security services.

"The ISA and the Israel Police must intensify their capabilities among the Arab community, while isolating the violent extremists and dealing with them with a firm hand."

He added, "We must not give in to the temptation of thinking that the security forces alone are sufficient to deal with this phenomenon. We must work to return a sense of trust between the Jewish and Arab populations because only then will they be able to carry out a real battle against the Jihadist Salafist threat that harms the Arab community even more than it does us."

The President concluded by stating, "In our struggle for Israel's security we must be just and strong, strong and just. My wish for us all is that through our combined thinking, we shall navigate the State of Israel and Israeli society toward a safer horizon".

<http://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/206655#.Vp3YC1InLEQ>