

GEERT WILDERS

IMPACT: A prominent politician in the Netherlands, Geert Wilders has decried what he calls the “Islamization” of the Netherlands and advocates a ban on the Qur’an. He believes Islam is a problem and promotes anti-Muslim tropes, namely that Islam is not a religion; it is a totalitarian and violent ideology. His alarmist, discriminatory, and racist rhetoric paints all Muslims as violent individuals who seek to dominate Europe.

- Geert Wilders is a **Dutch politician, author, and founder and current leader of the Party for Freedom (PVV)** in the Netherlands. In late 2016, Wilders was leading in the polls for the March 2017 election. In 2017, PVV gained 20 seats in the Dutch House of Representatives.
- The **Party for Freedom’s 11-point manifesto begins with a plan to “de-Islamize” the Netherlands.** As reported in *The Independent*, the manifesto seeks to close mosques, Islamic schools, and asylum centres; **“the borders will be shut down with a blanket ban on migrants from Islamic countries; women will be forbidden from wearing a headscarf in public; and the Koran will be banned.”**
- In 2008, **Wilders produced a short film called *Fitna*, which presents scenes of violence alongside quotes from the Qur’an.** In a 2008 interview with the *Guardian* about the film, **he said, “Islam is something we can’t afford any more in the Netherlands. I want the fascist Koran banned.** We need to stop the Islamisation of the Netherlands. That means **no more mosques, no more Islamic schools, no more imams...**” In a 2008 piece, Wilder stated he hoped the documentary showed that the “Qur’an is not some dusty old book, but that it is used today as a source of inspiration for, and justification of, hatred, violence and terrorism in the world, Europe and America.”
- In 2009, Wilders promoted his movie, *Fitna*, at a National Press Club event in the United States, co-sponsored by the anti-Muslim think-tank, Center for Security Policy. **Republican senator John Kyl also hosted a screening of Wilders’ movie on Capitol Hill** in Washington, D.C. ACT for America, an anti-Muslim grassroots organization, includes *Fitna* on their recommended films list.
- Wilders has repeatedly claimed that Islam is not a religion; rather, it’s a “political ideology,” a “totalitarian ideology,” and an “existential threat to our survival as a free nation.” He has stated that **Islam is “the ideology of a r*tarded culture,”** is the “problem,” and that “the problems of Islam are at the core of Islam, and do not belong to its fringes.” He claims that “Islam – not Islamism but Islam itself – preaches the political submission of the whole world to Allah.” Upon receiving the Free Speech Award for his efforts to promote the freedom of speech in Miami in 2009 from the Florida Security Council, **Wilders stated, “The right to religious freedom should not apply to Islam.”**
- Wilders often **likens Islam to Nazism and communism.** His film, *Fitna*, states that “in 1945 Nazism was defeated in Europe” and “in 1989 communism was defeated in Europe.” “Now the Islamic ideology has to be defeated.” He has described Islam as a “fascist ideology” and the “communism of today.” He has compared Muslims’ holy scripture, the Qur’an, to Hitler’s *Mein Kampf*. In 2009, he stated that the Qur’an “is a book that calls for hatred, violence, murder, terrorism, war and submission.”
- Since 2008, Wilders has **written for the Gatestone Institute,** described by *Intercept* reporter Lee Fang as an organization “infamous for its role in publishing ‘fake news’ and spreading hate about Muslims.” Gatestone republished an English translation of a 2017 interview featuring Wilders, in which he stated, “I personally believe there are extremist people and moderate people. But I do not believe in two kinds of Islam. There is only one.... You get your head chopped off should you wish to interpret Islam.” **He went on to claim that “Islam... seeks to dominate,” and that “In Europe almost weekly innocent people are slaughtered in name of Allah and Islam.”**

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- Wilders has **repeatedly called for a ban on Muslim immigration**. In a 2016 piece, he claimed, “Stopping Islamic immigration is a matter of survival.” In an interview with *CBN* in May 2012, **Wilders asserted, “I am proud to say that our culture... is not only better, far better, than what I see as a barbaric Islamic culture, and that we should fight to preserve it.”**
- Since January 2016, Wilders has **written a numerous pieces for the far-right media outlet, *Breitbart***. In his articles, Wilders has called on Muslims to “leave Islam, opt for freedom,” stating, “We encourage as many Muslims as possible to turn their backs on Islam and become Christians or atheists or whatever. The more Muslims freeing themselves from Islam and the yoke of Muhammad, the better.”
- In December 2016, **Wilders tweeted “#2017in3words No More Islam.”** In a 2017 interview, when asked if he wanted to ban Islam, Wilders responded, “I do not rule out that this may be necessary in the long run,” and went on to state, **“You must make it unattractive in this country to profess Islam.”**
- In an interview with anti-Muslim activist, Pamela Geller for her blog in *Atlas Shrugs* in September 2008, Wilders stated that many Muslims immigrate to the U.S. and Europe to “submit us,” “The Qur’an is a fascist book,” and the Muslim prophet Mohammed was a “pedophile” and “war criminal.”
- In September 2010 Wilders exclaimed, “No mosque here!” at the proposed site of Park51 community center near Ground Zero. He stated it was time to “draw the line so that New York... will never become the new Mecca.” **Wilders described Mecca as “a city without freedom.”** His appearance in New York was **supported by to Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer**, head of Stop Islamization in America, a branch of the neo-Nazi group Stop Islamization of Europe.
- In 2015, **Wilders was the keynote speaker at the Muhammad cartoon contest event hosted in Garland, Texas** by Pamela Geller and Robert Spencer’s American Freedom Defense Initiative, identified by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) as an anti-Muslim group. At the event Wilders **called on the audience to “de-Islamize our societies,” “expose Mohammed,” and “fight against Mohammed and his followers with the pen.”** The event made headlines after two gunmen attempted to attack the event and were killed by police.
- In June 2018, **Wilders announced that the PVV would be hosting an “International Muhammad Cartoon Contest” in the building of the Lower House in The Hague.** Wilders stated that American cartoonist Bosch Fawstin, winner of the Garland, Texas, cartoon contest, would be serving as judge.
- Wilders **has traveled frequently to the U.S. to meet with American politicians who support his anti-Muslim message.** In 2009 he **attended the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC)** where he said that “Muslim immigration is eroding traditional Dutch liberties.” In 2015, US Representatives Louie Gohmert (R-TX) invited Wilders to speak to fellow Republicans on Capitol Hill, where Wilders spoke about “fighting radical Islam.” Gohmert and Steve King (R-IA) held a joint press conference with Wilders where they commended one another’s efforts to “strengthen Western civilization.” At the press conference, Wilders said, “It’s not easy to speak out against Islam, but somebody should do it.”
- Ahead of the Dutch elections in March 2017, Rep. King made headlines when he tweeted his support for Wilders, stating, “Wilders understands that culture and demographics are our destiny. We can’t restore our civilization with somebody else’s babies.”
- In February 2015, **Wilders attended the Defeat Jihad Summit organized by CSP**, run by Frank Gaffney, alongside Mike Pompeo, Steve King (R-IA), Ted Cruz, David Yerushalmi, John Guandolo, Nonie Darwish, Zuhdi Jasser, and others.

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- In 2016, **Wilders was found guilty of inciting discrimination against Dutch Moroccans.** During a 2014 campaign [speech](#) he asked “supporters if they wanted to have ‘more or fewer Moroccans’ in the country. When the crowd shouted back ‘Fewer!’, he replied: ‘Well, we’ll take care of that.’” In **February 2017, ahead of the Dutch parliamentary elections, he said, “There is a lot of Moroccan scum in Holland who make the streets unsafe,”** also adding, “Not all are scum.”
- In February 2009, the **UK’s Home Office refused Wilders entry into the country** because his opinions “threaten[ed] community harmony and therefore public safety”. In October 2009, the ban was [overturned](#). On May 28, 2018, **Wilders released a video message in support of British anti-Muslim activist and founder of the English Defense League, Tommy Robinson.** In the video, Wilders called for Robinson’s release calling him a “freedom fighter and Islam critic.”
- Wilders has **praised Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban** for building a “border fence to stop the flow of immigrants from predominantly Islamic countries,” stating that Orban “does not want to repeat the mistake that Western Europe has made by opening its doors to Islamic mass immigration.” In 2017, Wilders [tweeted](#), “Orban is so right and the EU is so wrong. Orban has more backbone and character than all the cowards of the EU combined.”
- In April 2015, **Wilders spoke at the Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamization of the Occident (PEGIDA) rally** in Germany. He [called](#) for the people to “look at the state of freedom, safety, and terror in the Islamic world,” saying that they “do not want that here.” **Pointing to Israel, he said it was an “island in a sea of Islamic barbarism” and a “beacon of freedom and prosperity in a region of Islamic darkness,”** calling for Germany to “never submit to barbarism.”
- During a security and justice [conference](#) in the Hague, Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein, **United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, described Wilders as a “demagogue” who spreads “lies and half-truths, manipulations and peddling of fear.”**
- The [David Horowitz Freedom Center](#), an anti-Muslim organization, has [financially sponsored](#) PVV and Wilders’ [visits](#) to the United States in January and February 2015. The center [contributed](#) roughly \$150,000 to Wilders’ Party for Freedom over 2015-2016.