

Islamic Group Spokesman Charged in Denmark

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COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) - A radical Islamic group spokesman has been charged with threatening the government for distributing a leaflet urging Muslims to "eliminate" rulers that prevent them from joining the Iraq insurgency, a Danish prosecutor said Monday.

The leaflets, from the Danish chapter of Hizb ut-Tahrir, called on Muslims to travel to Iraq to join the insurgents fighting coalition troops. They also urged Muslims to "eliminate your rulers if they stand in your way" - a phrase prosecutors interpret as a direct threat to the Danish government.

Denmark has 530 troops stationed in southern Iraq.

"We have now finished looking at the material and decided there are grounds to start formal charges," Deputy Regional Prosecutor Karen-Inger Bast told The Associated Press.

She said charges against Fadi Abdullatif, the spokesman of the Danish chapter of the group, were filed March 16.

Abdullatif also was charged with violating anti-racism laws for postings on the group's Web page encouraging the killings of Jews, Bast said.

Calls to Abdullatif's telephone were unanswered Monday, but he has previously said police and prosecutors are "twisting the meaning" of the leaflets, which were passed out in 2004.

In 2003, he was given a 60-day suspended jail sentence for another Internet posting that encouraged similar racist killings.

Hizb ut-Tahrir, founded half a century ago, wants to peacefully establish a Muslim state across the Middle East operating under religious laws in the Quran. It preaches that Western-style democracy is unacceptable.

The group has been outlawed by some countries amid fears its recruits could include terrorists.

Australia's government said two weeks ago it was investigating the activities of the Australian chapter of Hizb ut-Tahrir for distributing leaflets urging Muslims to rise up against coalition troops in Iraq.