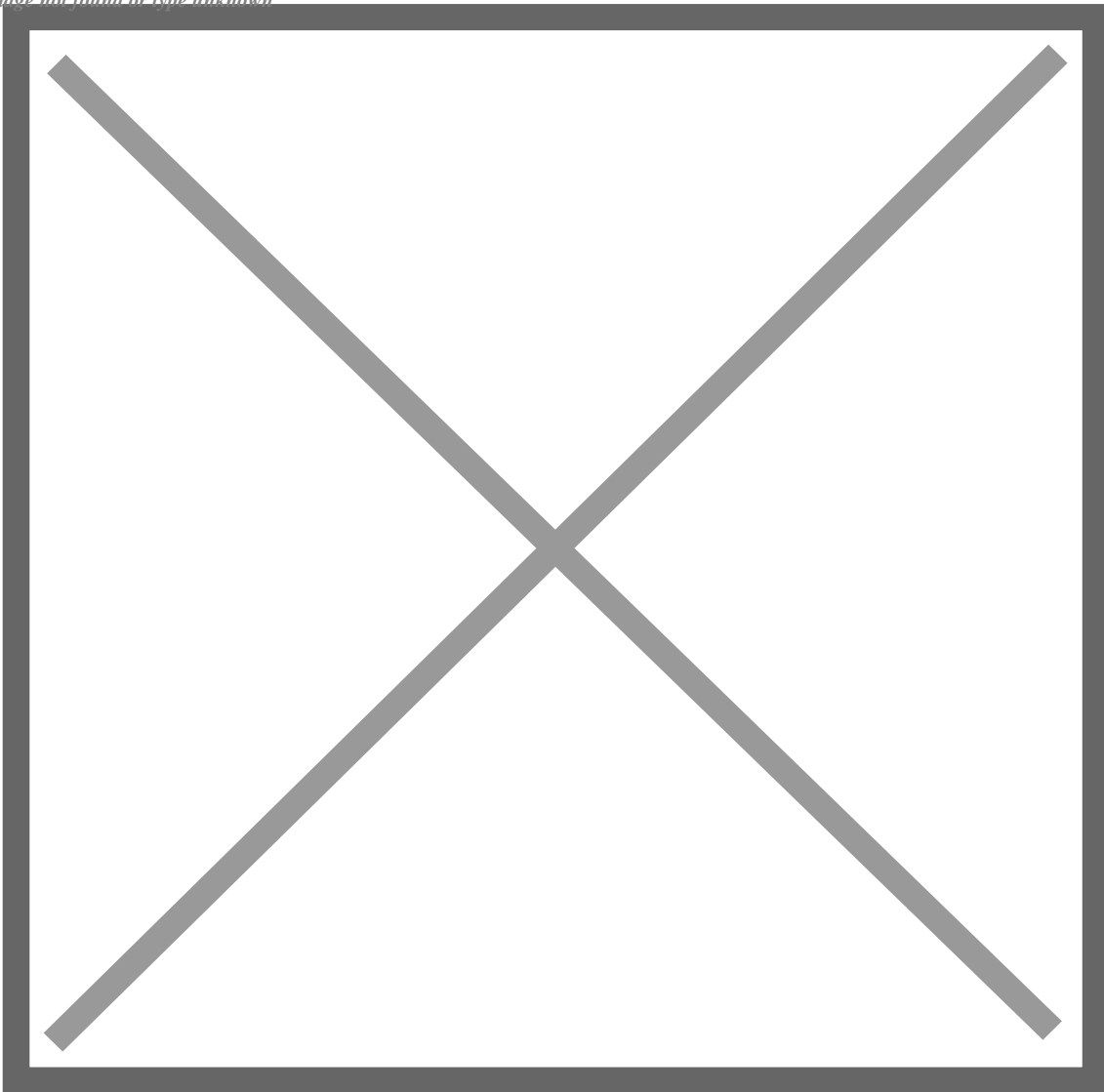


UN chief warns of far-right, white supremacy threats in West

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Antonio Guterres said greatest terrorism threat in West "comes from the extreme right, neo-Nazis and white supremacy"?

United Nations, December 21 (RHC)-- UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned of the threats posed by extreme right-wing and white supremacist groups in the West in the wake of authorities in Germany uncovering a group that planned to launch a coup attempt.

The UN chief, speaking to reporters during his annual end-of-year press conference in New York on Monday, said the case in Germany was just one example of the threat posed by the extreme right-wing to democratic societies around the world. "It has been demonstrated that the biggest threat of terrorism today in Western countries comes from the extreme right, neo-Nazis and white supremacy," Guterres said.

"And I think we must be very clear and very firm in condemning every form of neo-Nazism, white supremacists, any form of anti-Semitism, anti-Muslim hatred," he said. "This is clearly a threat, and we must fight that threat with enormous determination," he added.

Germany's Federal Prosecutor's Office arrested 25 suspects earlier this month when thousands of police conducted raids on 130 sites across 11 German federal states that targeted adherents of the so-called Reich Citizens (Reichsbuerger) movement. The Reich Citizens do not recognise the Federal Republic of Germany and its democratic structures.

Prosecutors said members of the movement were suspected of "having made concrete preparations to violently force their way into the German parliament with a small armed group." They added that the 22 arrested individuals were German citizens and were detained on suspicion of "membership in a terrorist organisation", while three others allegedly supported the organisation, including a Russian citizen.

According to reports, the conspirators sought to form "homeland security companies" that would carry out arrests and executions after an overthrow of the German state.

The UN chief made his comments on Monday in response to a question as to whether he felt that Elon Musk, the new and volatile owner of social media platform Twitter, was a threat to free speech. Guterres said that social media companies had a particular responsibility to preserve freedom of the press and to avoid spreading hate on their platforms. But he demurred on directly addressing Musk's suitability to run a global social media company.

"My recommendation to whoever owns any platform is to make sure that the freedom of expression, especially of journalists, is respected and that hate speech, neo-Nazism, white supremacy, the other forms of extremism, do not find their way through those social platforms," he said.

"I have no personal feelings in relation to who manages a platform. I'm very interested in about how the platform is managed."

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