The bad news keeps coming. In Brussels last week, anti-terror police foiled another extremist plot to attack EU citizens and western institutions. The battles on the front lines of the information battlefield are taking place 24/7. Hate crimes are on the rise.

Cities in Europe are facing increases of 40% more hate crimes. A right-wing group is criminally charged in Berlin. A neo-Nazi plans attacks all over Europe.

A migrant is shot from the balcony of a home in Italy, where hate crimes have quadrupled in the last six months. We too often see the results of extreme hate in action.
The Arab News ‘Preachers of Hate’ series goes at the heart of grappling with the complex dynamics of hate and bias – from ISIS to far white extremists, from Sarajevo to New Zealand.

For the series, it suddenly becomes all to obvious: Hate does not form randomly. It builds through the propagation of leaders and the accumulation of grievances, issues and life experiences.

"It’s a process – one we all brush up against at some point in our lives. It can be identified. It can be understood. It can be disrupted", Clayton Christiansen, a professor at the Harvard Business School

His group has targeted foreigners in the Levant, kidnapping and killing the as needed. Think he is too far away, over 3200 km from Europe? But he doesn’t stop there. His group and supporters regularly recruit members virtually in Europe.

Just last week a terrorist plot was foiled in Brussels by anti-terror police and EU law enforcement. By putting a spotlight on hate preachers like Qais, there is an organic effort to raise awareness on the virtual battlefield and motivating citizens on the frontlines.

The Preachers of Hate series works because it delves into the Pre-Hate environment. What are the conditions that form hate? It doesn’t take long to develop a framework of H.A.T.E.—four factors that facilitate and foster hate and extremism.

- **Hide** – For Qais’ supporters, it is easy to be anonymous online, especially on the dark web. That allows people to publicly unload their worst ideas on the world or privately scheme a plan of action
- **Association** –Qais pushes an anti-western agenda, creating an umbrella group for everyone that hates the EU and West
- **Thought Control** – We believe the “world” suppresses our thinking. They don’t let us protest, they
arrest us, or they take down our online content. This stokes our fire

- **Enforcement** – The outside world’s paranoia about their sacred data leads to strict security and privacy rules

Think of this as a model as designed to tackle the breeding of hate. One step at a time, it lays the groundwork to fight back. The Arab News initiative is part of this movement and key in creating the conditions to turn the tide.

**About the author**

Faisal J. Abbas is a journalist, author and Editor-in-Chief of the leading Middle East English-language daily, Arab News. Prior to this, He has been the Editor-in-Chief of the Dubai-based English language service of Al Arabiya News Channel since July 2012. Abbas has been a journalist for over 15 years, starting with Future Television (Lebanon) then Al Hayat pan-Arab daily. Upon moving to London in 2005, he became Asharq Al Awsat’s media editor.

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