

Greek police detain suspected ringleader of Belgian terror cell, says source

Photos and DNA evidence sent to Belgium to see whether one of the four detainees is Abdulhamid Abaaoud, the man believed to be mastermind behind plot



Belgian soldiers patrol in Antwerp after security forces smashed a suspected Islamist "terrorist" cell planning to kill police officers Photo: NICOLAS MAETERLINCK/AFP

By Rob Crilly, New York, and agencies

8:18PM GMT 17 Jan 2015

A police source says Greek police have detained four suspected terrorists, including one who could be the man wanted by Belgian authorities as an alleged ringleader of a jihadi cell.

The source spoke to the Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorised to speak publicly.

Belgian police believe they disrupted a major jihadi plot to kill police officers, retrieving weapons and disguises after a firefight at an apartment in Verviers on Thursday night.

The source in Greece said the four were arrested on Saturday, including one who "matches the description" of Abdelhamid Abaaoud - the man who Belgian authorities suspect was the mastermind behind the dismantled jihadi cell there.

Greek police have sent photos, fingerprints and DNA material to Belgium and are waiting to see whether the person is indeed Abaaoud, the source said.

Two men were killed during a firefight with Belgium's special forces on Thursday night. They were named locally as Redouane Hagaoui and Tarik Jadaoun, who had recently returned from fighting in Syria.

A third man was shot in the abdomen and seriously injured.

Belgian media also reported that investigators were still hunting one man - a Belgian with Moroccan roots who had gone to fight with the Islamic State group in Syria, and was said to be in Greece.

A Belgian named Abdelhamid Abaaoud became well-known on social media last year when pictures of his 13-year-old brother, Younes Abaaoud, were circulated, claiming him to be the youngest of the foreign fighters to have joined up with the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

After the raid, police found four AK47 rifles, four handguns, ammunition and explosives. The cell was also equipped with police uniforms, radio, false documentation and an import sum of cash.

Prosecutors said they were planning to kill police officers in public and in police stations.

The Belgian government has estimated up to 200 of its citizens have left the country to fight in Syria.



SIGN UP TO OUR
THE WORLD TODAY
NEWSLETTER



Read everything first. Then get the best of it in your inbox.

Get the world's news, analysis and opinion straight from the source. Sign up to our newsletter today.

[SIGN UP NOW »](#)

