

## Charlie Hebdo attack: France's worst terrorist attack in a generation leaves 12 dead

Ten journalists and two policemen killed after the attack by three gunmen on the Charlie Hebdo magazine office in Paris



### Hanging out with Downton Abbey's Dan Stevens

YouTube prankster Ben Phillips found himself watching the Rugby World Cup with Dan Stevens and Harry Styles

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By Gordon Rayner, Henry Samuel and Martin Evans in Paris

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With ruthless precision, two masked al-Qaeda gunmen calmly fire eight shots at an unarmed policeman as a terrorist attack of “indescribable barbarity” nears its end.

Moments after this image was taken, the policeman, lying mortally wounded on the pavement of a Parisian boulevard, held up a hand in a plea for mercy. A second later, one terrorist jogged past and shot him in the head without breaking stride, just one more act of brutality in an attack that left 12 dead.

Earlier two gunmen armed with automatic rifles stormed the office of the satirical magazine Charlie Hebdo, a target for Islamist terrorists since it printed cartoons of the Prophet Mohammed in 2006 and 2011, and killed cartoonists and satirists whose names were called out as they were shot dead in turn.

“We have avenged the Prophet!” the killers shouted in accentless French as they left the building, having identified themselves as acting on behalf of “al-Qaeda in Yemen”. France’s worst terrorist attack in a generation was also its most meticulously planned; the killers had not only memorised the names of those they wanted to kill, they also planned their getaway well enough to evade the police.

A nationwide manhunt is now underway after a raid in Reims proved fruitless.

The killers were named in the French media as Said and Chérif Kouachi, brothers aged 34 and 32, and Hamid Mourad, 18. Chérif was reportedly part of an Iraqi jihadist network dismantled in the nearby 19th arrondissement. He was jailed for three years on terror charges in May 2008.

Two addresses in Paris were raided and an building in Reims was being searched by forensic officers. Reims is reported to be the home town of one of the men.

“An act of indescribable barbarity has been committed today in Paris,” said President François Hollande, promising that the killers “will be hunted for as long as it takes to catch them and bring them to justice”. **David Cameron** was among the world leaders who condemned the murders as an attack on free speech.



A doctor who was one of the first medics to enter the magazine’s office described a “war scene”. Four survivors remained critical in hospital after being shot in the face, chest or leg.

The terrorists managed to evade police despite apparently crashing their black Citroen C3 into a bollard, forcing them to abandon the car, before holding up an elderly motorist at gunpoint and stealing his grey Renault Clio.

For several years, Europe’s intelligence services have feared that Muslim extremists who have travelled to Syria, Iraq and elsewhere to fight would return home to plot carnage, and the gunmen’s ruthless efficiency left little doubt that they had received military training.

The Kouachi brothers are Franco-Algerians who came back from Syria last summer.

On Wednesday night thousands of Parisians staged a rally to express their outrage and their determination to defy the terrorists with the slogan “Je Suis Charlie” — “I Am Charlie”.

Some who gathered in the Place de la Republique brought along copies of the Mohammed cartoons.

They chanted “innocents” and many were in tears.

In Trafalgar Square, hundreds of people staged a spontaneous show of solidarity with the French people, holding up pens to signify their support for the dead journalists.

An Israeli busker, Bar Markovich, played La Marseillaise on his violin as bystanders formed a circle and threw their pens into the centre



The Prime Minister called a meeting with Jon Day, head of the Joint Intelligence Committee, to be briefed on any possible threat in Britain, where the terrorist threat level remains “severe”. Earlier, Mr Cameron and Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, who is visiting London, were given a briefing by MI5 and MI6 in Downing Street and held a conference call with Mr Hollande.

Mr Cameron said: “We must be very clear about one thing, which is we should never give up the values that we believe in and defend as part of our democracy and civilisation and believing in a free press, in freedom of expression, the right of people to write and say what they believe. These are the things we are defending and we should be very clear on this day that these values that we have are not sources of weakness for us — they are sources of strength.”

Paris Charlie Hebdo attack: live

The Metropolitan Police contacted at least one British magazine and told its staff to keep doors locked and telephone the police at the first sign of trouble. Wearing hoods and dressed in black, the killers attacked the Charlie Hebdo office in central Paris at 11.20am local time on Wednesday, when the editorial team was holding its weekly meeting on the magazine’s press day. “Tell the media this is from al-Qaeda in Yemen,” they told one bystander.

Corinne Rey, a cartoonist, was forced at gunpoint to enter the code for the front door as the gunmen threatened to kill her toddler, whom she had just picked up from nursery. The gunmen then went to the second-floor editorial room to begin the attack in an “organised commando” style, according to one police source.

Top of their hit list was the magazine’s production director, Stéphane Charbonnier, known as Charb, who had a price put on his head by al-Qaeda in 2013. “They knew their target in advance,” said a police source. “The attackers looked for him in the room, shouting ‘Where is Charb? Where is Charb?’ They killed him then sprayed everyone else.” Mr Charbonnier’s police bodyguard, assigned to him following earlier death threats, was among those killed. He was named last night as Franck Brinsolaro.

There were suggestions that others were on a hit list. Among the dead were cartoonists Jean Cabut, who was known by the pen-name Cabu and drew the Mohammed cartoon in 2006, Bernard “Tignous” Verlhac and Georges Wolinski.

Ms Rey said: “They shot on Wolinski, Cabu. It lasted five minutes. I had hidden under my desk. They spoke French perfectly – they said they were al-Qaeda.”

Armed with Kalashnikov assault rifles, ammunition jackets and, according to one report, a grenade launcher, the killers were triumphant as they left the office, shouting: “We have killed Charlie Hebdo! We have avenged the Prophet Mohammed!”

The first policemen on the scene were unprepared; arriving on bicycles, they were forced to take cover until backup arrived.

Around the corner, the gunmen exchanged fire with armed police, shouting “Allahu Akbar!” or “God is Great” as they did so. They then shot dead their final victim, the policeman. Having rolled on to his side to protect himself, the officer turned to look over his shoulder at the approaching gunmen, before holding up his right hand. As the gunman who fired the final shot left the scene, he held up his index finger, a common gesture among Islamist terrorists. The murder was filmed from an upstairs window and posted online.

The officer was named locally as Ahmed Merabet. Mobile phone footage apparently showed him asking his assailants, "You want to kill me?" to which one of the gunmen replied, "Yes, chief" before shooting him.

Initial reports suggested that among the dead were Bernard Maris, 68, a former French central bank official and columnist, Michel Renaud, a guest of Mr Cabut who was visiting the editorial conference, cartoonist Philippe Honoré and subeditor Moustapha Ourad, Frédéric Boisseau, 42, a caretaker and father of two, and Elsa Cayat, a psychoanalyst and columnist.

Gérald Kierzec, 40, a casualty doctor who was among the first on the scene, told The Telegraph: "There was a first body lying in the lobby. Then I took the stairs which were covered in blood. When I got to the second floor, there were bodies lying one on top of another. It was carnage, with war wounds. There was blood everywhere. I have never seen anything like it in my career."

Mr Hollande called for Wednesday to be a national day of mourning, telling the French people: "Our best weapon is our unity. We must be ourselves, conscious that our best weapon is our unity, the unity of all our fellow citizens in the face of this trial. Nothing can divide us, nothing must oppose us, nothing must separate us."



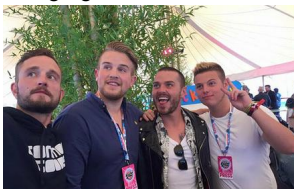
Gérald Kierzec, 40, a casualty doctor

A Syrian man claiming to represent Isil welcomed the attack. "The lions of Islam have avenged our Prophet. They are lions," he said.

In its most recent edition, Charlie Hebdo carried a cartoon stating that there had been no attacks in France so far, with a terrorist saying: "Wait — we have until the end of January to present our new year wishes." Less than an hour before the attack, its Twitter account posted a cartoon parodying the Isil leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. It was captioned: "Best wishes. You too, al-Baghdadi." He replies: "Especially to your health."

Mr Cabut once said his only regret was "not being ferocious enough" in his caricatures. Mr Charbonnier, in 2012, borrowed a phrase from Che Guevara that his friends would say makes a fitting epitaph: "I would rather die standing than live on my knees."

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