

## Josh Earnest Says the White House Doesn't Call Terror Attacks 'Radical Islam' Because It's Not 'Accurate'

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Pressed on why the Obama administration doesn't describe the terror attacks in France as "radical Islam" like the French government does, White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Tuesday that it's about "accuracy."

NPR reporter Mara Liasson said the French "are calling the ideology, the warped view, by a name," and pointed out that Earnest wouldn't do that. "Is there a reason for that?"

"The first is accuracy," Earnest said. "These are individuals who carried out an act of terrorism and they later tried to justify an act of terrorism by invoking Islam and their own deviant view. The second is, this was an act that was condemned by Muslim leaders. We have not chosen to use that label because it does not accurately describe what happened."

He added, "We are trying to be as specific an accurate as possible. "



Demonstrators light candles as they gather before a mass unity march in Paris on Jan. 11, 2015, following the terrorist attacks in France. (Anadolu Agency/Getty Images)

Earlier in the exchange, Earnest had said: "I think the fact that the majority of victims of terrorist attacks carried out by Al Qaeda and adherents and their particular brand of violence, the majority of them are Muslims, I think is a pretty clear indication that this is not a matter of the world being at war with Islam. The world and the United States,

as we've discussed before, are in the context of ISIL, is at war with these individuals, violent extremists, who carry out these acts of terror and try to justify it by invoking this religion."

Liaison said, "France, your ally in this effort, has put a name on this ideology, which he calls radical Islam. You have bent over backwards to not ever say that. There must be a reason."

"The reason is twofold. I certainly wouldn't want to be in a position where I'm repeating the justification that they have cited that I think is completely illegitimate. They have invoked Islam to try to justify their attacks," Earnest said.

Liaison responded, "So to call it radical Islam, you feel, would be playing into their hands?"

Earnest said, "Well, I think what I'm trying to do is describe to you what happened. These are individuals who are terrorists."