

A stylized map of France is centered on the page. The map is composed of a network of orange and yellow lines connecting various points, creating a mesh-like structure. The background is a dark brown color with some faint, scattered orange and yellow dots. In the top left corner, the text 'IICAGE' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below it, in a smaller, white, sans-serif font, are the words 'Witness | Empower | Justice'.

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FRANCE briefing: **August**

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French National Developments

Government announces abaya ban in public schools

- Newly appointed minister of Education Gabriel Attal [announced the banning of abayas](#) - a traditional long dress worn by Muslim women - from public schools.

Attal, [an ambitious and trusted right hand man of President Macron](#), justified the ban by framing abayas as [“attacks on secularism.”](#) A secretary of State accused [“networks of radical Islam”](#) of [“weakening the Republic”](#) through the promotion of abayas.

- [A series of polls](#) indicated strong and overwhelming opposition to traditional garments' wearing in public schools, further proving Islamophobia must now be regarded as an organic attribute of French governance and culture.
- President Macron [linked the ban](#) to the murder of Samuel Paty :

“We also live in a society with a minority, people who, by hijacking a religion, challenge the Republic and secularism. (...) This has sometimes led to the worst. We can't pretend that the terrorist attack and the murder of Samuel Paty didn't happen in our country.”


His statements demonstrate the rationale behind the ban: Muslim children are criminalised for expressing their Muslimness, an identity the State deems a security threat.

- The ban will not require the adoption of a new piece of legislation. The 2004 law banning any “religious

ostentatious symbol” from public schools has already been chosen as the efficient legal stick to discipline Muslim girls. The Law - which will celebrate its 20th anniversary in March 2024 - was originally used to target hijab. Its remit is now expanded and includes abayas.

- The ban confirms the steady shift of the centre towards far-right policies. This political tendency, a norm since the start of the War on Terror, is expected to continue. Before the end of Macron's tenure in 2027, a new Islamophobic piece of legislation is expected.

Islamophobia



Home Office nominates new CIPDR secretary following resignation of scandal-hit predecessor

- The Home Office appointed a new secretary - Etienne Ataire - to the CIPDR, one of the institutions in charge of implementing the “systematic obstruction” policy.
- This designation comes after the resignation of former secretary Gravel following the scandal that unveiled the deep corruption and toxic cronyism lying at the heart of the institution.
- Ataire is a [former magistrate](#) who later became an inspector in charge of overseeing the State’s anti-radicalisation policies.
- Ataire never engaged in any political career and, now approaching the twilight of his State service, he is not expected to do so. Therefore, in contrast with Gravel’s clear willingness to achieve public recognition to push his personal political ambitions, Ataire is likely to pursue his mission hidden from public sight.

This discretion is meant to facilitate the institution’s gradual redemption.