

In the name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
All praise and thanks belong to God, the Lord of the Worlds.
May peace and prayers be upon Prophet Muhammad and his family.



Council on American-Islamic Relations
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May 21, 2025

His Excellency Laurent Bili
Ambassador of France to the United States
Embassy of France
4101 Reservoir Rd NW
Washington, DC 20007

Dear Ambassador Bili:

On behalf of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), the largest Muslim civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, I am writing to express our strongest condemnation regarding the recent proposal by President Emmanuel Macron's political party to ban individuals under the age of 15 from wearing the hijab, or Islamic headscarf, in public spaces.

This authoritarian attack on religious freedom, which would exclusively target the French Muslim community, is an affront to the claimed "liberty" and "equality" in France's national motto.

Such a dictatorial proposal would create scenarios in which young girls wearing scarves are stopped on the street and questioned about their faith. If they are Christian, Jewish or Sikh wearing a head covering or scarf, they could go about their business after declaring their faith. But a Muslim girl who declared her faith would be subject to legal action.

Is this really the 21st Century in France?

Earlier this year, CAIR called upon French lawmakers to reject proposed legislation banning religiously mandated attire in sports, further underscoring the troubling trajectory of such discriminatory measures. We have consistently opposed efforts to restrict religious clothing in France, viewing these measures as deeply harmful to individual liberties and religious freedoms.

CAIR urges your government to reconsider this harmful proposal, uphold the principles of freedom and equality, and foster an inclusive environment respectful of all religious practices.

We thank you for your attention to this matter and would welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns further.

Sincerely,

Robert S. McCaw
Director of Government Affairs Department
Council on American-Islamic Relations