



Information Submission for Consideration

UN Human Rights Council Side Event

Event Title:

Security-Oriented Policies of Germany and France and the Security Challenges of Muslim Communities

Organizing Organization: COJEP INTERNATIONAL

Status: ECOSOC Special Consultative Status

Location: Geneva, Concordia 1 Room

Date: 24.04.2026 (between 3pm – 4 pm)

1. Speaker Information

Full Name:	Murat Yiğit
Title:	Assoc. Prof. Dr.
Institution:	Turkish National Defence University
Country:	Turkey
Email:	murat.yigit@msu.edu.tr
Phone (optional):	00905313374249
Area of Expertise (brief):	Comparative Politics, Neocolonialism, Civilization Studies

2. Presentation of the Speaker

Presentation Title:	The impact of securitization approaches in France on French Muslim community
Presentation Abstract	
Please provide a technical abstract addressing the following points:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Security-based policy or practice in France• The impact of these policies on Muslim communities• Concrete examples (legislation, administrative measures, court decisions, statistics)• Assessment from an international human rights law perspective	
The text should be academic and evidence-based.	
*In recent years, a widespread consensus has emerged that securitization policies have exerted a profound influence on the rising anti-immigrant sentiment and Islamophobia in France. It is posited that examining the operations and consequences of security-based policies—which often restrict liberties and lead to human rights violations—within the framework of Securitization Theory would be analytically beneficial. In this regard, the	

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increasing anti-Muslim sentiment in France will be analyzed in this presentation through the contributions of the public and the media to these security-based policies, guided by the following parameters.

1. Security-based policy or practice in France

In recent years, France has increasingly adopted security-oriented policies addressing what authorities describe as “radicalization,” “separatism,” and threats to republican values. These approaches intensified following a series of terrorist attacks between 2015 and 2020 and culminated in the 2021 law “reinforcing respect for the principles of the Republic” (commonly referred to as the “Separatism Law”). The legislation expanded administrative oversight of religious associations, strengthened the state’s authority to dissolve organizations, increased monitoring of places of worship, and introduced stricter rules for private education and foreign funding of religious institutions. In addition, administrative practices such as mosque closures, enhanced surveillance measures, and restrictions on religious symbols in certain public contexts reflect a broader securitization framework linking religion—particularly Islam—to public order concerns.

2. The impact of these policies on Muslim communities

These policies have had significant social and institutional consequences for Muslim communities in France. Critics argue that measures initially framed as counterterrorism tools increasingly affect everyday religious life, community organization, and civic participation. Muslim associations, charities, and mosques have reported heightened administrative scrutiny, financial audits, and legal uncertainty. At the societal level, securitization discourse may contribute to the stigmatization of Muslim identity by implicitly associating religious practice with security risks. This dynamic can affect employment opportunities, access to public space, and civic engagement for Muslim individuals, particularly women who visibly express their religious identity, such as those wearing headscarves.

3. Concrete examples (legislation, administrative measures, statistics)

Concrete manifestations of securitization include the closure of dozens of mosques and community organizations under emergency or administrative powers, as well as the dissolution of several Muslim associations accused of promoting extremism. Local measures restricting religious attire—such as bans on “burkini” swimwear in certain municipalities—have also generated national controversy. These policies have been repeatedly reviewed by the judiciary, including France’s highest administrative court, the Council of State (France), which has sometimes overturned local restrictions when deemed disproportionate. Nonetheless, the cumulative effect of legislation, administrative oversight, and public



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security discourse has significantly reshaped the institutional environment in which Muslim civil society operates.

4. Assessment from an international human rights law perspective

From the standpoint of international human rights law, these developments raise questions concerning the protection of religious freedom, equality, and non-discrimination. Instruments such as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) guarantee freedom of religion, freedom of association, and freedom of expression, while permitting certain restrictions when necessary for public order or security. Jurisprudence from the European Court of Human Rights emphasizes that such restrictions must satisfy the principles of legality, necessity, and proportionality. Critics argue that when security policies disproportionately affect a particular religious group—even if formally neutral—they may constitute indirect discrimination. Consequently, the French securitization approach continues to generate debate regarding its compatibility with international human rights standards and the broader balance between security and civil liberties in democratic societies.

References

Amnesty International

Human Rights Watch

European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights (FRA). *Being Muslim in the EU: Experiences of Muslims, 2024; Second European Union Minorities and Discrimination Survey (EU-MIDIS II)*.

European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI). *ECRI Report on France (Sixth Monitoring Cycle)*.

Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) – ODIHR. *Hate Crime Reporting Database*.

Commission nationale consultative des droits de l'homme, CNCDH), France. *Annual Reports*.

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR).

3. Identified Human Rights Concerns

Please check the applicable issues and provide an explanation:

Violation of freedom of religion or belief

Discrimination / Indirect discrimination

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- X Restriction of freedom of association
- X Disproportionate security measures
- X Arbitrariness in administrative sanctions
- X Stigmatization / Profiling
- Other:

Violation of freedom of religion or belief

Several measures adopted in recent years in France have raised concerns regarding the protection of freedom of religion or belief. Administrative closures of mosques and restrictions on religious symbols in certain public spaces have been justified by authorities on security or public order grounds. However, critics argue that some of these measures may interfere with the ability of Muslim individuals and communities to practice their religion collectively and publicly. Debates surrounding bans on religious attire—such as local prohibitions on “burkini” swimwear—illustrate tensions between the principle of secularism (laïcité) and the protection of religious freedom under international human rights law.

Discrimination / Indirect discrimination

Although many of the policies introduced are formally neutral, scholars and human rights organizations have raised concerns that they may disproportionately affect Muslim communities. Measures aimed at preventing “separatism,” for instance, primarily target associations, schools, and places of worship linked to Islam. From the perspective of international human rights law, policies that produce unequal impacts on specific religious groups may constitute indirect discrimination, even if they are not explicitly framed in religious terms.

Restriction of freedom of association

Recent legislation has strengthened administrative control over associations, including the possibility of dissolving organizations accused of promoting extremist ideas or undermining republican principles. Several Muslim civil society organizations have been dissolved under these provisions. While states have a legitimate interest in combating extremism, the broad scope of such powers raises questions about the protection of freedom of association and the potential chilling effect on legitimate civic activity within Muslim communities.

Disproportionate security measures

Security policies introduced in response to terrorism—including enhanced surveillance, mosque inspections, and emergency administrative measures—have sometimes been criticized as disproportionate. Human rights observers argue that when security policies systematically target institutions associated with a specific religious group, their proportionality and necessity must be carefully assessed.

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Arbitrariness in administrative sanctions

Concerns have also been raised regarding the use of administrative powers—such as mosque closures, dissolution of associations, or restrictions on public events—based on broadly defined security criteria. Although judicial review is available, critics argue that the preventive nature of these sanctions may allow significant discretion to administrative authorities.

Stigmatization / Profiling

Finally, the securitization of Islam in public discourse may contribute to the stigmatization of Muslim communities. By framing certain religious practices as potential security concerns, these narratives risk reinforcing social suspicion, discrimination, and forms of profiling affecting Muslim individuals in everyday life. In addition, some scholars argue that media coverage focusing disproportionately on security-related narratives involving Islam may further amplify these perceptions and contribute to the normalization of stigmatizing representations in the public sphere.

4. Legal Framework Analysis

Please refer, where applicable, to the following international norms:

- International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)
- European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)
- Principle of non-discrimination
- Principles of proportionality and necessity

Please specify the relevant article numbers.

From the perspective of international human rights law, the securitization policies adopted in France must be assessed in light of obligations arising under **the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** and the **European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR)**, both of which guarantee fundamental civil liberties while allowing certain restrictions under strictly defined conditions.

Freedom of religion or belief is protected **under Article 18 of the ICCPR and Article 9 of the ECHR**, which safeguard the right to manifest religion individually or collectively in public or private. While limitations may be imposed for reasons such as public safety or public order, international jurisprudence requires that such restrictions be prescribed by law and strictly

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necessary in a democratic society. Administrative measures affecting places of worship, religious associations, or religious attire must therefore be carefully examined to ensure that they do not disproportionately interfere with the exercise of religious freedom.

Freedom of expression and peaceful assembly are also relevant in this context. **Article 19 of the ICCPR and Article 10 of the ECHR protect freedom of expression**, including political and religious speech, while **Article 21 of the ICCPR and Article 11 of the ECHR** guarantee the right to peaceful assembly and association. Restrictions on public demonstrations, civic initiatives, or community organizations must therefore satisfy the legal tests of necessity and proportionality and should not undermine legitimate democratic participation.

Furthermore, the principle of equality before the law and non-discrimination is articulated **in Articles 2(1) and 26 of the ICCPR and Article 14 of the ECHR**. Even when security policies are formulated in neutral terms, they may raise concerns under international law if they disproportionately affect individuals belonging to a particular religious or ethnic group. In such cases, differential impacts may amount to indirect discrimination.

Overall, international human rights standards require that security measures adopted to address legitimate public safety concerns remain consistent with the principles of legality, necessity, proportionality, and non-discrimination in order to ensure the effective protection of civil liberties in democratic societies.

5. Concrete Case or Data

If available, include:

- Statistical data
- Academic research references
- Official documents
- Court decisions
- Testimony (anonymized)

Please attach references.

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The Practical Implementation and Societal Impact of Securitization in France

Several concrete cases, statistical data, and official documents illustrate the practical implementation of securitization policies affecting Muslim communities in France. One significant development concerns the enforcement of the 2021 law “reinforcing respect for the principles of the Republic” (commonly known as the “Separatism Law”). According to statements by the French Ministry of the Interior, authorities conducted inspections of numerous places of worship suspected of promoting separatist ideology. Out of approximately 2,600 Muslim places of worship nationwide, 99 mosques were investigated and at least 21 were administratively closed following these inspections.

Administrative sanctions have also targeted civil society organizations. For example, the Muslim humanitarian NGO BarakaCity was dissolved by government decree in 2020, followed by the dissolution of the Collective Against Islamophobia in France (CCIF)—an organization that had documented anti-Muslim discrimination but was accused by authorities of maintaining links with Islamist networks. These measures illustrate the expanding use of administrative dissolution powers in the counter-extremism framework.

The institutional pressure described above translates into stark societal consequences, as evidenced by recent data. As of 2025, the shift toward this security-based framework has been accompanied by a 72% increase in reported hate crimes, reflecting a heightened climate of hostility. This atmosphere is mirrored in daily life, where 42% of Muslims report personal experiences of discrimination—a figure that climbs sharply to 60% for veiled women, who remain the most vulnerable targets of bias. These statistics align with a broader shift in public perception, as 60% of the general public now views Islam as a threat to national identity or security.

Furthermore, the administrative tightening is evident in the educational sector, where 4,710 legislative infringements related to schools and private institutions have been recorded, showcasing the extensive reach of the oversight measures. Scholars examining this securitization argue that the cumulative effect of mosque closures, association dissolutions, and these 4,710 recorded infringements has significantly reshaped the institutional environment of Muslim civil society. Ultimately, these developments generate ongoing debates regarding the balance between counter-terrorism objectives and the protection of civil liberties within democratic legal systems.





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6. Policy Recommendations

Recommendations addressed to UN mechanisms:

- X Request information from States
- X Call for a country visit
- X Inclusion in a thematic report
- X Call for dialogue

1. Request Information from States

- Legal Justification for Sanctions: Request detailed explanations from the Government of France regarding the "necessity and proportionality" of the administrative closure of 21 mosques and the dissolution of NGOs (e.g., CCIF, BarakaCity).
- Clarification of Statistical Data: Seek clarification on the objective criteria used for the 4,710 recorded legislative infringements and request a breakdown of these inspections across different religious communities to detect potential bias.
- Effectiveness of Judicial Review: Request information on the percentage of administrative sanctions challenged in court and the rate at which the judiciary has granted stay-of-execution orders against these measures.

2. Call for a Country Visit

- Field Observation on Gender Bias: UN Special Rapporteurs should investigate the obstacles faced by Muslim women in public life. A visit is essential to understand why 60% of veiled women report discrimination in education and employment.
- Safe Consultations with Civil Society: Conduct private meetings with representatives of dissolved or scrutinized organizations to assess the "chilling effect" on civic engagement and freedom of association.
- Institutional Monitoring: Visit private schools and places of worship subject to "permanent oversight" to evaluate the practical impact of the anti-separatism framework on daily community life.

3. Inclusion in a Thematic Report

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- Case Study on Indirect Discrimination: Include the French context as a primary case study in reports focusing on "formally neutral laws with disproportionate impacts on minorities."
- The Global Risk of Securitization: Analyze how framing religious practices as "security threats" undermines social cohesion in democratic societies, contributing to the 60% public perception of Islam as a threat.
- Secularism vs. Women's Rights: Feature the tension between specific interpretations of laïcité and international standards in reports concerning "Freedom of Religion and the Rights of Women."

4. Call for Dialogue

- Structural Engagement with Independent Actors: Encourage the French government to move beyond state-appointed religious representatives and engage in direct dialogue with independent Muslim civil society actors.
- National Social Contract Against Polarization: To counter the rising climate of hostility and the 72% increase in hate crimes, the UN should facilitate multi-stakeholder dialogues aimed at drafting a "National Social Contract Against Polarization."
- Human Rights-Based Policing: Promote panels involving law enforcement and Muslim community leaders to rebuild trust and transition toward security practices that center on human rights and anti-profiling.



7. Declaration and Confirmation

I declare that the information provided in this form complies with academic ethical standards and is accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Full Name: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Murat Yiğit

Date: 12.03.2026

Signature:

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