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FRANCE briefing:
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French political developments

Imam Iquioussen deported to Morocco following international legal battle

- After a series of courts' rulings and appeals - some of which deemed the European warrant arrest issued at the request of French authorities as illegal - Belgium handed over Imam Hassan Iquioussen to Moroccan authorities, as per France's wishes.
- The French Supreme Court will release its final ruling on the case in a few weeks. A previous ruling - which validated the expulsion order - was based on a legal reasoning which criminalised normative and orthodox religious teachings.

If this reasoning is upheld, the Supreme Court will legitimise a legal breach which could ultimately lead to curtailing Muslims' religious freedom in France even more.

Barcelona Treaty signed, reinforcing France-Spain collaboration and friendship

- France and Spain signed a [bilateral treaty](#) to reinforce their "*friendship and cooperation.*"

Article 14 mentions of the treaty mentions that:

- "*Each Party reiterates its priority commitment to **the fight against terrorism and violent extremism** and*

cooperates in the recognition and care of victims of terrorism."

- The article further proves how counter-terrorism measures and policies have pervaded systems of governance.

Furthermore, it may be a potential foundation upon which France will export its wide and sharp anti-Muslim executive powers to a key European ally.

Islamophobia

Religious conference cancelled after far-right pressure

- A religious conference organised by two famous imams on the topic of taqwa and ibadah [was cancelled](#) by the local mayor in conjunction with the Ministry of the Interior - after both were pressured by the far-right on social media.
- The strategy leading to the silencing of an apolitical expression of religion in France underscores both how entangled far-right narratives and State policies are, and how they have created the space for the far-right to assert themselves.

Deeply Islamophobic content exposed in secularism training delivered to teachers

- [A training on secularism](#) - given by a Paris-based Institute - to future public teachers was leaked by an investigation website.
- Extracts from the training indicate the stridently Islamophobic nature of the presentation:

“Neutrality in religious matters does not mean equal treatment between religions”

“It appears that certain religions hinder political action to a greater or lesser extent or threaten the social body more than others.”

If the objective is the preservation of a traditional way of life and the

maintenance of a certain conception of the relationship between man and woman, Islam, which is a non-traditional religion in France, will have to be opposed more than Catholicism”

- Overt Islamophobic narratives being taught as guidelines for future public teachers will strengthen the legitimacy of State-led policies which securitise and demonise Muslims and Islâm. Furthermore, these narratives will be adopted by students, extending these Islamophobic tropes’ influence over time.