

# Sarkozy orders Muslim veil ban in public

Last Updated: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 | 2:58 PM ET [Comments 539](#) [Recommend 200](#)

The Associated Press



*A Moroccan*

*woman walks on a street in Le Mesnil-Saint-Denis, 38 kilometres southwest of Paris, in January 2010. French President Nicolas Sarkozy plans to introduce legislation banning women from wearing Islamic veils that fully cover the face and body in public places. (Christophe Ena/Associated Press)*

French President Nicolas Sarkozy has ordered legislation that would ban women from wearing Islamic veils that fully cover the face and body in public places, the government said Wednesday.

It is Sarkozy's first political action toward an outright ban, though he has repeatedly said such outfits oppress women and are not welcome in France, home to a firmly secular government.

Government spokesman Luc Chatel said after a cabinet meeting that the

president decided the government should submit a bill to parliament in May on an overall ban on such veils "in all public places."

That ups the stakes in Sarkozy's push against veils such as the burqa and niqab and chador. Some in his own party have bristled at a full-out ban, and France's highest administrative body has questioned whether it would be constitutional.

Sarkozy insisted that "everything should be done so that no one feels stigmatized," according to Chatel. Sarkozy said the veils "do not pose a problem in a religious sense, but threaten the dignity of women."

Chatel did not say how the new bill would affect a resolution already slated for discussion in parliament May 11 on ways of limiting the full veils.

France, nominally Roman Catholic, is also home to western Europe's largest Muslim population of at least five million. Very few French Muslim women wear face-hiding veils, but the issue has become a flashpoint of debate on national identity, the rights of religious groups in France's secular society and integration of France's immigrant populations.

Legislators and members of the government have been discussing ways to limit veils such as the burqa and niqab and chador for months. France banned Muslim head scarves and other "ostentatious" religious symbols from classrooms in 2004.

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**[indefiance](#) wrote:**Posted 2010/04/21

at 6:48 PM ETThis is a despicable act of self-righteous petty facism. That the "state" thinks it can act in this way simply because it has applied an interpretation onto something is not only deplorable, but a violation of the most basic concepts of justice.

If these people are being forced to wear these garments, you have a point and that would be a criminal matter already, but, if they wear them of their own free will, whether you agree with it or not, trying to control it by saying you're "offended" by it is so pathetic that it broaches the realm of disgusting, and in my view is purely criminal.

If their constitutional laws do not protect the people from this kind of thing, then I would say that france is nothing more than a dictatorship, and a society on the same level as iran (and canada, sadly).

Of course, the gov't is not the people. I never had much respect for france in the past, but if the people support this measure, that will turn to dislike. Abusing the power to make laws shakes the very foundation of any society which claims to be free, and it must never be tolerated, no matter our personal opinion of the specific issue.

I don't like anything religious, but I would never attempt to criminalize individuals for expressing their religion.

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**[IronMaiden](#) wrote:**Posted 2010/04/21

at 6:39 PM ETFrance belongs to the French, kudos for Sarkozy.

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**[VinceJensen](#) wrote:**Posted 2010/04/21

at 6:36 PM ETMy mother, from Northern Europe, always wore a hat or a kerchief on her head in public so as to not show her hair. I never understood the rational for that practice, just as I do not understand the purpose of the veil, etc.

If I see someone wearing a veil, it causes me to wonder if s/he is either as beautiful as whatever, or as ugly as "whatever". Must be my twisted way of thinking.

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- [2](#)

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**Mectron** wrote: Posted 2010/04/21

at 6:35 PM ET @Smron1 How would you be able to outlaw Muslim veils without outlawing balaclavas to protect your face on a cold day?

Simple, because ther balaclavas is a piece of clothing, the veil is a RELIGIOUS SYMBOL and as with ALL religious display in public, it NEED to be BAN!

- [8](#)
- [10](#)

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**ECanuck** wrote: Posted 2010/04/21

at 6:33 PM ET " I support the ban in places where faces need to be visible for ID or security purposes.

Otherwise I don't see what the big deal is."

A post with common sense.

- [9](#)
- [4](#)

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- Previous
- [1](#)
- [2](#)
- [3](#)
- [4](#)
- [5](#)
- [6](#)
- [7](#)
- [8](#)
- [9](#)
- [10](#)
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