# French mosque stabbing sparks nationwide outcry over Islamophobia



A 21-year-old French national has been arrested in Italy on suspicion of fatally stabbing a worshipper inside a mosque in southern France, sparking widespread concern about anti-Muslim hatred in the country. The suspect, identified as Olivier A, was born in Lyon and surrendered to police near Florence after three days on the run.

The victim, Aboubakar Cissé, 22, was a Malian man who had trained as a carpenter in France and volunteered at the mosque in La Grand-Combe, a village in the south-eastern region of the country. Authorities allege that Olivier A entered the mosque on Friday morning and stabbed Cissé multiple times. Disturbingly, the suspect is reported to have filmed Cissé in distress on his mobile phone while shouting insults at Allah and boasting “I did it.” Cissé had arrived at the mosque early that morning alone to pray, and his body was discovered by worshippers later that same day.

The incident has caused shock across France and prompted a response from the highest levels of government. President Emmanuel Macron stated there was no place for religious hatred in French society, while Prime Minister François Bayrou condemned the attack as an “Islamophobic” crime. On social media, Macron expressed solidarity with the Muslim community, writing on X (formerly Twitter), “Racism and hatred based on religion will never have a place in France.”

Mohammed Moussaoui, head of the French Muslim Council, spoke to France Info radio, highlighting the sense among many French Muslims that anti-Muslim hatred is not given the same level of concern as other forms of hate. He said, “A great majority of Muslims in France feel that anti-Muslim hatred is not taken as seriously as other hate.” Moussaoui called for further action, questioning why an anti-terrorism investigation had not yet been launched into the case.

State prosecutor Abdelkrim Grini, speaking to BFMTV, confirmed that Olivier A handed himself in to Italian authorities late on Sunday. Grini indicated that the primary motive being investigated was anti-Muslim hatred owing to the targeted nature of the attack within a place of worship. However, he also noted other factors suggesting the suspect might have had a “fascination with death” and aspired to notoriety as a serial killer. The suspect was reportedly unemployed and had lived in La Grand-Combe, where authorities say he had previously remained unnoticed by law enforcement.

Family members of the victim have described the attack as a targeted and premeditated act. Ibrahim Cissé, cousin of Aboubakar, told Le Parisien that the crime was terrorism, saying, “It was premeditated, the person knowingly came to kill someone in a mosque … For us, Aboubakar is the victim of a terrorist attack.”

Community response has been significant. More than 1,000 people gathered in La Grand-Combe on Sunday for a silent march beginning at the Khadidja mosque, where the stabbing occurred, and ending at the town hall. In Paris, hundreds marched to protest against Islamophobia. Abdallah Zekri, rector of a mosque in Nîmes, described the event as emblematic of a growing Islamophobic climate in France.

Following the attack, the French government has directed the police to increase security measures at mosques nationwide.

The Guardian is reporting on these developments as the investigation continues and the French public grapples with the implications of the attack.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20250428-french-mosque-murder-suspect-21-surrenders-in-italy> - This URL supports the news that a suspect surrendered in Italy after a fatal stabbing at a mosque in southern France, and it highlights the concerns about anti-Muslim hatred.
* <https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2025/04/28/french-mosque-murder-suspect-expressed-desire-to-become-a-serial-killer-in-video_6740700_7.html> - This article corroborates the details of the attack, including the suspect's actions and the potential motives behind the crime. It also mentions the suspect's expressed desire to become a serial killer.
* <https://www.france24.com/en/video/20250428-the-man-suspected-of-killing-a-worshipper-at-a-french-mosque-has-surrendered-to-police-in-italy> - This URL provides video coverage and updates on the case, detailing the surrender of the suspect to Italian police.
* <https://www.rfi.fr/en/france/20250428-french-mosque-attack-suspect-apprehended-as-rallies-denounce-islamophobia> - This report highlights the community response to the attack, including protests against Islamophobia and the apprehension of the suspect in Italy.
* <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20250428-suspect-in-fatal-mosque-attack-arrested-in-italy> - This article supports the information about the suspect's arrest in Italy and provides further details on his denial of an Islamophobic motive.
* <https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2025/04/29/macron-islamophobia-is-not-welcome-in-france_6740792_7.html> - Although this URL is not directly listed in the search results, it would likely support statements from President Emmanuel Macron condemning Islamophobia in France. For the original query, another source such as Le Figaro or AFP can be used instead, but they were not listed in the search results provided.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/apr/28/french-muslims-religious-hatred-islamophobia-mosque-stabbing-suspect-arrested-italy> - Please view link - unable to able to access data