

# Paris mosque drops complaint against French writer Michel Houellebecq

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The rector of the Grand Mosque of Paris has confirmed that he has decided to drop his complaint against award-winning French writer Michel Houellebecq over “violent comments” targeting Muslims made during a recent interview.

In a statement issued on Friday – the day after a meeting between the two men – the mosque’s rector Chems-Eddine Hafiz said that “after having taken note of the modifications” of the remarks made by Michel Houellebecq and “of the regrets he expressed”, the Grand Mosque of Paris has decided to drop legal proceedings against him.

Houellebecq is quoted as saying, “The wish of the native French population, as they say, is not that Muslims assimilate, but that they stop robbing and assaulting them. Or else, another solution – that they leave.”

On Thursday, Houellebecq acknowledged that some paragraphs were “ambiguous” and sent Le Figaro newspaper a new, amended version of his initial remarks. According to the author, what the French “are asking for, and even what they are demanding, is that foreign criminals be deported, and in general that justice be tougher on petty criminals.”

Mohammed Moussaoui, president of the Union of Mosques of France – who had also announced his intention to file a complaint – said in a statement on Friday that he would continue his legal action against the French writer.