

# *France Deputy Speaker Quits Over Sexual Harassment Allegations*

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Paris, May 10 (RHC)-- The deputy speaker of the French parliament has announced his resignation over allegations of sexual harassment made by fellow politicians. Denis Baupin, the French lawmaker and former member of France's Green Party, announced his decision in a statement published on his website after four female party officials and lawmakers claimed they had been subjected to sexual harassment by him.

The accusers claimed they had received a number of explicit messages, or had been the subject of lewd behavior from the lawmaker. Rejecting the claims, Baupin's lawyer said his client plans to sue the women for defamation.

"Sexual harassment and even more so sexual aggression are totally foreign" to Baupin, who is one of parliament's six deputy speakers, the lawyer added. Earlier on Monday, the president of the French National Assembly, Claude Bartolone, had summoned Baupin and asked him to resign.

The 53-year-old lawmaker recently left the pro-environment Greens Party over disagreements about party strategy. The French law has a statute of limitations of three years in cases of sexual harassment or

aggression, except when the alleged victim is a minor.

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