

# France to open high-security jail in Amazon

France plans to build a maximum-security prison for drug traffickers and radical Islamists in its overseas territory of French Guiana, sparking an outcry among local officials



**Devil's Island**

Atlantic Ocean

Europe's Spaceport

Kourou

Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni

Cayenne

FRENCH GUIANA

SURINAME

BRAZIL

100km  
60 miles

**High-security wing:** Built to house 45 high-level drug criminals and 15 terrorists as part of \$450 million prison expected to open by 2028. It will hold total of 500 inmates



Project, which follows string of attacks on prisons in France, aims to keep suspected drug traffickers from having any contact with their criminal network, French Justice Minister **Gérald Darmanin** (right) says



■ Saint-Laurent-du-Maroni once received prisoners shipped by **Napoleon III** in 1800s – including some bound for infamous **Devil's Island** penal colony, known for holding French army officer **Alfred Dreyfus**, who was accused of being spy

■ **Devil's Island** also features in **Henri Charrière's** best-selling book "**Papillon**", later adapted into 1973 Hollywood film starring **Steve McQueen** and **Dustin Hoffman** (left), and 2017 remake

Pictures: French Ministry of Justice, Getty Images, Columbia Pictures

Sources: Le Journal du Dimanche, Reuters, AFP, BBC

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