
French police ban Yellow Vest protests from Champs-Élysées area of Paris

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French police have banned the Yellow Vest protests from the Champs-Élysées and its surrounding area in the center of Paris on Saturday. Anyone found violating the ban faces a fine of up to €135.

“Didier Lallement, prefect of police, hereby prohibits any gathering of the yellow vests along the Avenue des Champs-Élysées and its perimeter including the presidency of the Republic and the National Assembly,” the Prefecture of Police of Paris said in a statement.

This coming Saturday would mark the 19th weekend of protests since the movement started on November 17, 2018.

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On Monday, following yet another weekend of violence, Prime Minister Edouard Philippe announced a ban on the protests in several areas of France including the Champs-Élysées, the Capitol in Toulouse and the Pey-Berland plaza in Bordeaux.

Authorities were quick to emphasize that the citizens may protest freely outside of the prohibited zones stating it is a *“fundamental freedom.”*

French authorities have [called for calm](#) amid plans to deploy troops across the country to provide additional security during this weekend’s protests.

As part of the 'Sentinelle' counter-terrorism operation, launched in January 2015, troops will be deployed to secure government buildings and other important sites, to allow police to maintain public order.

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"The last time the State requisitioned the army for policing operations was in 1947-1948," Élie Tenenbaum, researcher and defense specialist with the Institut Français de Relations Internationales, told [France 24](#).

However, the soldiers will reportedly be armed with automatic weapons, sparking fierce criticism over concerns about potential confrontations between protesters and heavily armed forces.

"Maintaining order in France should be the police's and the National Gendarmerie's business. It is not the army's job," Guillaume Larrivé, MP for the center-right Les Républicains party, said.

"It's unheard of," Benoît Hamon of France's Socialist Party said Thursday, adding that *"the government was releasing an arsenal of security and martial measures to mask the Interior Minister Christophe Castaner's incompetence."*
