

March of Anger by French police shows discontent with poor working conditions



Paris, October 3 (RHC)-- Discontented police officers in the French capital, Paris, are on a “March of Anger” against poor working conditions and an anti-police sentiment that has been there since the so-called yellow vest protests erupted nearly a year ago.

Thousands of protesters marched from Place de la Bastille square to Place de la Republique square on Wednesday. It is the first such strike in the country since 2001.

A proposed pension reform is a matter of grievance for the police. The reform, sought by President Emmanuel Macron, aims to reduce France’s 42 different pension systems to one to make it fairer. Some professions, such as the police, say they will lose out.

“Today, all we want is to improve our working conditions,” said Frederic Lagache, a representative of a police union. “It’s unacceptable that we work until the age of 65 and run after thieves until we’re 65. All we want is respect, consideration, and that beyond words, we see concrete actions.”

The March of Anger also comes in reaction to the anti-police sentiment, which has increased over the police response to the yellow vest protests, and a wave of suicides.

According to the latest figures provided by police unions, 52 police officers have committed suicide so far in 2019. UNSA Police Union National Secretary Thomas Toussaint said the anti-police sentiment has become a "burden" for some officers.

Yellow vest protesters have accused officers of using excessive force against them. The yellow vest movement, named after the high-visibility safety jackets worn by most of the demonstrators, started in mid-November over fuel tax increases. It is now a nationwide protest against government policies.

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