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Paris, November 23 (RHC)-- In France, protests are ramping up against a controversial new bill that would ban the publication of images of on-duty police officers and expand the power of law enforcement,

including through the use of surveillance drones.

Press freedom and human rights groups, including the U.N. Human Rights Council, have condemned the bill, which passed its first hurdle in the Parliament Friday and will undergo another vote by lawmakers Tuesday.

Journalist and co-founder of news outlet Mediapart, Edwy Plenel, spoke to reporters in Paris, saying: "What this government is trying to do is for us to stop carrying out this vigilance, for citizens, whistleblowers, for journalists in possession or not of a press card, to be more and more hindered in revealing the failings of the state. And if that happens, it's the end of democracy."

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