

Thousands march in France protesting violence against women



?Groups fighting violence against women said at least 101 women have been killed this year by their partner or former partner in France [Adrienne Surprenant/AP]??

Paris, November 21 (RHC)-- Tens of thousands of protesters have taken to the streets across France to demand more government action to prevent violence against women. Saturday's demonstrations, in Paris and other French cities, came amid growing outrage in the country over women killed by their partners and as French women are increasingly speaking out about sexual harassment and abuse.

"We are always putting the blame on women," Parisian demonstrator Ghislaine Gireire-Revalier said, expressing sympathy for women who are trapped in violent domestic situations. "What we forget is the phenomenon of being in one's grip ... little by little it's like a spider that surrounds you in its web."

Groups fighting violence against women said at least 101 women have been killed by their partners or former partners in France this year – about one woman every three days. More than 220,000 women are suffering physical or sexual abuse by their partners each year, according to a 2017 nationwide study.

Activists are urging President Emmanuel Macron's government to dedicate 1 billion euros (\$1.1bn) annually to fight violence against women, instead of 360 million euros (\$406m) spent now, in part to create more shelters.

Demonstrator Meryll Le Goff said "there are measures that have been put into effect like the telephone for those in serious danger," a special phone with a button to push to alert police. More than 2,500 such phones were being deployed in the country in September, the Justice Ministry said.

"But there aren't enough for everyone," Le Goff said. "Measures half done, men who are detained temporarily or even imprisoned but are eventually released without any measures that follow ... that's the problem."

The protests are part of a week of global actions marking the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women.

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