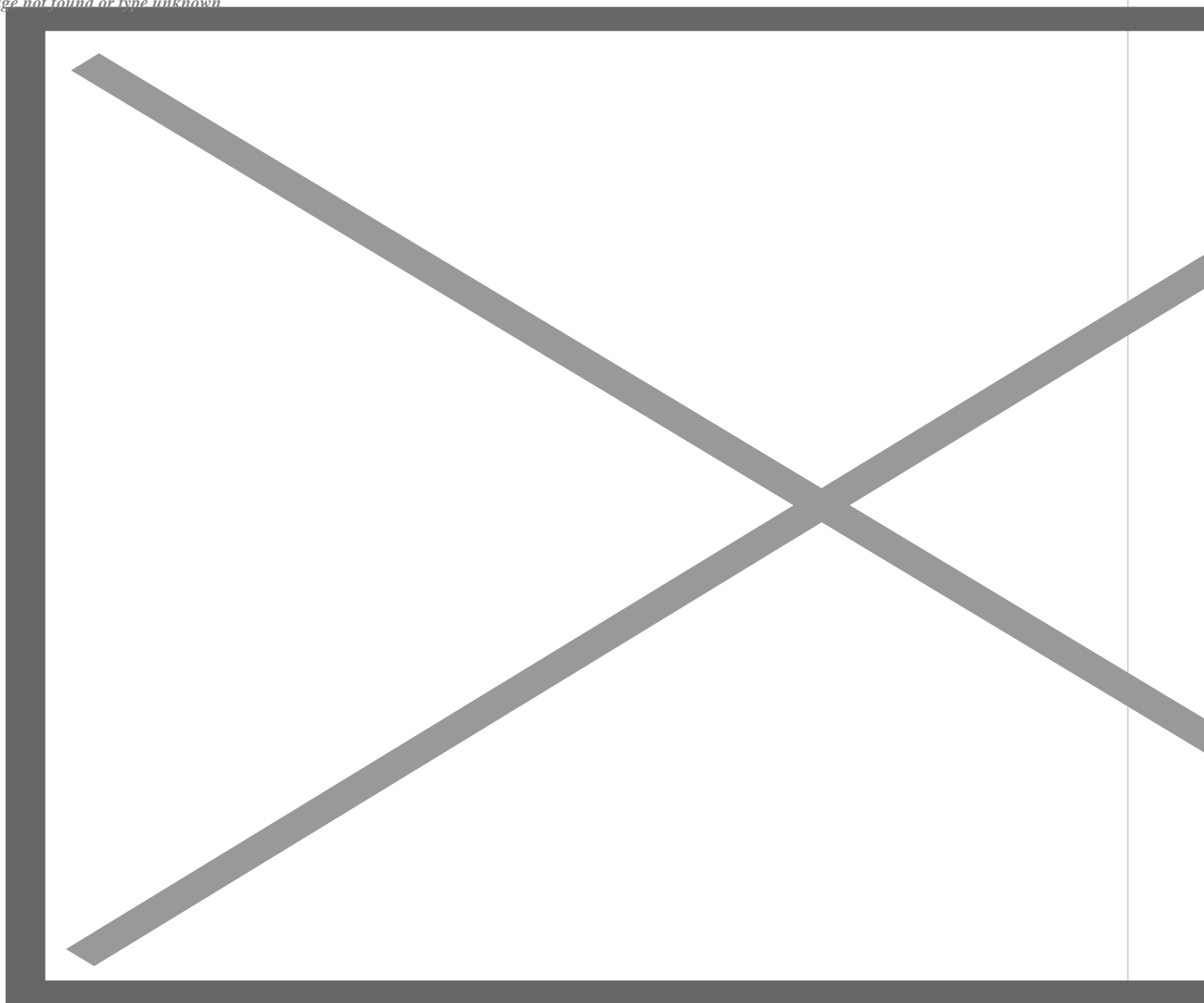


France: controversy grows over police excesses in the face of protests

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Havana, March 25 (RHC) The controversy over the police response to the protests against the retirement reform in France has intensified. In the last hours, an audio obtained by the newspaper Le Monde circulated, in which members of an elite military unit were heard discussing the use of force against protesters. The day before, the prefect of the Paris Police, Laurent Nuñez, announced that he had transferred the case to the judicial authorities. The Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunja Mijatovic, expressed concern in a statement. Mijatovic mentioned incidents in which police officers and gendarmes were targeted by some people; however, she also noted that the police used excessive force. This Saturday, the press echoed the complaint of a railway worker, who on Thursday during a demonstration was hit by a tear gas canister. The Minister of the Interior, Gérald Darmanin, defended the police and gendarmes on Friday before what he described as a "small group of provocateurs". According to the headline, the attacks include stones, Molotov cocktails and pyrotechnic devices, with more than 100 people injured. For today, local marches were called to continue the movement demanding that President Emmanuel Macron reverse the retirement reform.

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