

## Escalating Unrest in New Caledonia

Since 14 May 2024, New Caledonia, particularly in Nouméa, has been engulfed in severe unrest characterized by burning, shooting, arson, and looting. A 48-hour curfew and a ban on public gatherings have been implemented in the Greater Nouméa Area, with heightened security measures across this French Pacific territory. The violent clashes have led to tragic outcomes, including one death and multiple injuries among civilians and law enforcement, with over 60 police injuries and around 130 arrests (as of this report). This turmoil has disrupted air, ground, and maritime transport, including the closure of La Tontouta International Airport (NOU) until 16 May 2024 and the suspension of emergency maritime shuttle services between Nouméa and Vallon-Dore.

The unrest originates from ongoing discussions in Paris regarding proposed constitutional amendments that could extend France's governance in the region. The pro-independence field action coordination committee (CCAT) has organized protests against plans to expand voter eligibility in local elections to include long-term French residents of the island.

In response to the escalating violence, Gérald Darmanin, Minister of the Interior and Overseas Territories, announced the imminent deployment of four gendarmerie squadrons from France to reinforce law enforcement efforts in New Caledonia. Additionally, Sonia Backès, president of the Southern province (New Caledonia), has called on President Emmanuel Macron to declare a state of emergency in the territory.

The situation in New Caledonia remains precarious, with potential further escalations of violence and unrest. The outcome of the ongoing debates in Paris about the territory's constitutional status will be critical in shaping the future stability of the region.