
Protesters in Chile reject reforms and popular rebellion continues

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Smoke and tear gas filled the air in Santiago as demonstrators clashed with riot police on during yet another day of protests – sparked by ballooning public transportation fees – after a promise of reform failed to end the unrest.

Tens of thousands gathered in the streets of Chile's capital to join the demonstrations, facing police water cannon, rubber bullets and tear gas. In addition to the police presence, around 20,000 soldiers have been deployed to quell the protests, carrying out over 5,000 arrests in the country since last Friday.

Earlier this week, President Sebastian Pinera extended an official apology and vowed to roll out social reforms to address the grievances -- including lowered electricity and medical costs and a hike in government pensions, among other things.

However, after declaring “war” on the demonstrations earlier this week, the president seems to have failed to convince the protesters.

As the riots continue, Santiago is largely paralyzed, with several subway stations and schools closed down, while some roadways remain blocked by flaming barricades constructed by protesters, who have also torched a number of train stations. Curfews have been introduced in the city, along with a national state of emergency, further clamping down on travel.