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## **Greece urged not to use excessive force during protests**

Amnesty International has urged the Greek authorities against using excessive use of force against protesters during continuing demonstrations in the capital Athens.

The call comes after a largely peaceful demonstration against government spending cuts was marred by small groups of hooded rioters who clashed with police. According to eyewitnesses, the police used excessive amounts of teargas against protesters.

"The Greek police face a tough challenge tackling a volatile situation on the ground but they must ensure that the policing of demonstrations is carried out in a manner that complies with international standards." said John Dalhuisen, Deputy Director of Amnesty International Europe and Central Asia Programme.

Video footage from yesterday's protests in Syndagma Square shows several police officers beating a demonstrator, pulling him by his hair and ripping off his top.

Thirty-three protesters were reportedly injured and taken to hospital, most with breathing problems or minor injuries. The Greek police also reported that 36 police officers were injured.

"The Greek authorities must prevent the excessive and indiscriminate use of force and other violations by the police in future protests. They must also ensure to investigate thoroughly, promptly, independently and impartially all allegations of such abuses," said John Dalhuisen.

Greek police are alleged to have used excessive force against a large number of peaceful demonstrators in Athens on 11 May, leading to more than 30 injuries, of which two were serious.