

Armed French police deploy in Dijon to quell ethnic gang violence

From [*The Times*](#)

PARIS (Reuters) – Armed police were deployed in part of Dijon, eastern France, after violence erupted between rival gangs for a fourth night running. Cars were torched and wheelie bins set alight late on Monday before several dozen police managed to restore order, authorities said.



A car and dustbins were set ablaze and members of the Chechen diaspora fired AK47 rifles into the air in the latest in a series of raids apparently against youths of

north African origin on council estates in the city in eastern France.

The unrest stemmed from “a settling of scores” between ethnic Chechens and local residents of Gresilles, a low-income district with a heavy North African immigrant population, said local prefect Bernard Schmeltz.

Regional radio news station France Bleu quoted Dijon prosecutor Eric Mathias as saying he had opened an investigation into attempted murder by an organised group and incitement to violence. Mathias said Chechens had allegedly used social media to issue a France-wide call for vengeance

over an attack on a member of their community by people from the Maghreb region of Northwest Africa.

The Chechens said they had come from all over France and also from Belgium and Germany to avenge a 16-year-old member of their community who they said was attacked and injured. Many said they were seeking the “north Africans” they blamed for the attack.

Eric Mathais, the state prosecutor in Dijon, said the violence was unprecedented and had a “racist motive”.