

Human rights breaches in Guinea Conakry and Madagascar

Press Releases

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- Ongoing brutal repression of freedom of speech and mass protests in Guinea Conakry
- Child work in Madagascar in violation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

On Thursday, the European Parliament adopted two resolutions taking stock of the rights of protestors in Guinea Conakry and the child labour situation in Madagascar.

Guinea Conakry

The European Parliament deplores the ongoing violence in the country, and strongly condemns the breaches of the freedom of assembly and speech, as well as recent acts of brute force by security personnel against political protesters, killings and other human rights abuses.

Since mid-October 2019, there have been mass demonstrations in Guinea, amid opposition fears that incumbent President Alpha Condé will seek to extend his constitutional powers and stay in his position beyond the current presidential mandates, which are restricted to two terms. The government response to the outbreaks has also been heavy-handed, notes the resolution, with an excessive, undue and illegal use of force by police against the crowds. The protests have occurred predominantly in the capital Conakry and the northern opposition stronghold Mamou.

MEPs call on the Guinean government to take urgent measures to ensure that the right to demonstrate freely is respected and urge all parties concerned to prevent tensions and violence from escalating any further. They also request that the authorities investigate and prosecute, according to international standards, members of the security forces against whom there is evidence of criminal responsibility.

The text was adopted by show of hands. For all the details, the full resolution will be available [here](#) (13.02.2020).

Madagascar

As a response to the large numbers of child workers in Malagasy mines, MEPs remind the country's authorities of "their responsibility to uphold the rights of children and guarantee their safety and integrity". They urge the EU and its member states to work with Madagascar to support them in adopting and implementing legislation, policies, budgets and programmes that "contribute to the full realisation of all children's rights", while calling on the EU delegation in the country to keep monitoring the situation.

In the resolution, Parliament also calls on the government of Madagascar to work towards eradicating child labour and on the EU to ensure this issue remains a vital element of its political dialogue with the country. The European Commission and the EU member states should also work closely with different sectors to ban child labour-related products and services from entering the EU's markets, MEPs add.

According to the World Bank, Madagascar has the world's fifth highest number of out-of-school children. In 2018, 47 % of all Malagasy children aged 5 to 17 were also engaged in child labour, including an estimated 86 000 child labourers in the mining sector, says the text. They mine for different minerals used in the electronic and automotive industries, which are also found in a wide range of products from paints to soil conditioners and from make-up to smart phones. The EU has a clear commitment to promote and protect the rights of the child in its internal and external actions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is the most widely ratified international human rights treaty.

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