Resolution on child labour in mines in Madagascar

2020/2552(RSP) - 13/02/2020 - Text adopted by Parliament, single reading

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on child labour in mines in Madagascar.

The text adopted in plenary had been tabled as a joint resolution by the EPP, S&D, Renew, Greens/EFA, ECR and GUE/NGL groups.

Parliament condemned the unacceptable use of child labour in all its forms, pointing out that some 152 million girls and boys aged between 5 and 17 worldwide are forced to work, most of them in the least developed countries, especially in Africa (72.1 million) and the Asia-Pacific region (62.1 million).

Members expressed concern about the large number of children working in Malagasy mines and the violations of their rights. They reminded the country's authorities of their responsibility to ensure respect for children's rights and guarantee their safety and integrity. In 2018, 47% of Malagasy children between the ages of 5 and 17 were forced to work, 86 000 of them in mines, with mining being the sector with the highest child mortality rate, with 32 deaths per 100 000 children aged 5 to 17.

Parliament welcomed the fact that the eradication of child labour is one of the priorities of the new Commission and asked it to elaborate on how it intends to tackle child labour through EU policy, legislation and funding, including new initiatives. It welcomed the new Commission's commitment to present a new comprehensive strategy on child rights and called on the EU to consider respect for human rights, including the fight against child labour and exploitation, as an essential element of its political dialogue with Madagascar.

Members called on the EU to work with Madagascar to support the adoption and implementation of legislation and action programmes that would contribute to the full realisation of all the rights of every child, as well as to the improvement of working conditions for all those involved in the mining sector. They also invited the EU Delegation in Madagascar to continue to closely monitor the situation of children's rights in the country.

Parliament called on the EU, as the world's leading human rights actor, to take the lead in eradicating child labour and to take immediate and effective action to end child labour in all its forms by 2025 at the latest. It recommended that the Commission put children's rights at the heart of the post-Cotonou agreement.

The Commission was invited to develop a comprehensive implementation strategy for the sustainable development agenda up to 2030 and to make the eradication of child labour a core objective. Parliament stressed the need, to this end, to include the fight against forced and child labour in all the EU’s Economic Partnership Agreements by means of binding and enforceable sustainable development chapters.

Lastly, Members called on the Commission and Member States to work closely with the various sectors to ensure effective monitoring of the various supply chains and prevent products and services related to child labour from entering EU markets.