

AFRICA RISK CONSULTING

Madagascar Monthly Briefing July 2026

Madagascar Summary 17 July 2026

The presidency confirms that presidential guard officers fired at drones that had been following transitional president Michaël Randrianirina's (2015-present) motorcade on 3 July. The Southern African Development Community (SADC) has urged the leaders of the transitional regime to put an end to arbitrary arrests and calls for the return of political exiles, a statement which the Malagasy government rejects. A United States (US) delegation holds talks with the Madagascan authorities on the Vara Mada mining project.

Presidential guard fires at drones spotted following the presidential motorcade

New threats are reportedly still looming over the security of transitional president **Michaël Randrianirina** (2025 – present). Gunshots were [heard](#) in the **Ivandry** area of **Antananarivo** in the early evening during rush hour on 3 July. Information the presidency released states that two explosive-laden drones were reportedly spotted following the presidential motorcade in Ivandry, whilst Randrianirina was on his way home. A drone is reported to have followed the convoy the previous day as well. The statement confirmed that members of the presidential guard opened fire on the drones, which were able to fly off by rising to a higher altitude.

One of the two drones is [said](#) to have disappeared, whilst the other continued to follow the convoy. Despite this threat, the president was nevertheless able to return to his home but security measures have been stepped up around the perimeter of his residence. According to the same report, security officials have already launched an investigation to identify the origin of these drones.

In his speech at a ceremony to hand over equipment to **Corps d'Administration des Personnels et des Services Administratifs et Techniques (CAPSAT)** in **Soanierana**, Randrianirina apologised to the public for the disturbance and concern caused by the gunfire the previous day. He [stated](#) that members of the presidential guard had fired shots to demonstrate that they are prepared to defend themselves and retaliate in the event of threats. He asserted that the numerous attempted attacks stem from individuals seeking to destabilise the country. The Malagasy government has recently acquired equipment capable of detecting drones, which was donated by **Russia**.

Almost three months ago, on 15 April, the Presidency had already issued statements regarding death threats against the president. The presidency's communications director, **Harry Laurent Rahajason**, reported that five thermal drones were reportedly spotted flying over his residence in Antananarivo between 12 and 13 April.

This was the third official statement confirming a planned assassination attempt against Randrianirina, who has been in power since October 2025 following the departure of former president **Andry Rajoelina** (2019-2025) after **Gen Z** protests saw his overthrow. At least fifteen people, including a French national, have already been remanded in custody in connection with the first case of an attempted assassination of Randrianirina (*see ARC Briefing Madagascar Apr 2026*).

SADC calls for an end to arbitrary arrests and the return of political exiles

The security and political situation in Madagascar was one of the main items on the agenda during an extraordinary [summit](#) of the **Southern African Development Community (SADC) Heads of State** held via video conference on 29 June. Randrianirina attended the summit, which was chaired by the current SADC chair, **South Africa's** President **Cyril Ramaphosa** (2018-present). In its resolutions, SADC urged the government, led by Randrianirina, [to](#):

“Honour its commitment to clear reforms, accompanied by a precise timetable, which are transparent and open to all Malagasy stakeholders (...)”.

At the same time, the summit emphasised the importance of upholding the rule of law and democratic governance and reiterated the need to engage in inclusive dialogue, promote reconciliation and organise national consultations during the transition period. SADC called on the government, the **Fiombonan'ny Fiangonana Kristiana eto Madagasikara (FFKM)** (council of Christian churches), and all stakeholders to act impartially, respect the constitution and seek consensus.

The summit also [called](#) for the release of political prisoners, an end to the arbitrary arrests of opposition leaders and members of Gen Z, and the return of political exiles to the country. This appears to allude to the situation of Rajoelina, who has been in exile since 12 October 2025. Furthermore, the summit expanded the mandate of the SADC **Panel of Elders** to include reconciliation, electoral reform and preparations for the referendum and parliamentary elections and approved the establishment of a SADC liaison office in Antananarivo, tasked with coordinating activities as part of the support being provided. Ahead of this extraordinary summit, the SADC had dispatched several missions to Antananarivo, notably that of the SADC Group of Elders, which the former president of **Malawi**, Dr **Joyce Banda** (2012-2014), led. Banda had conducted a series of consultations with various political stakeholders during these missions.

Notably, both Randrianirina and prime minister **Mamitiana Rajaonarison** rejected SADC's statement outright, asserting that there are no political prisoners in Madagascar and that the imprisoned politicians were prosecuted for offences such as embezzling public funds. It appears that the leaders of the Refoundation government do not intend to comply with the SADC's directives. In February 2026, the Malagasy authorities formally handed over the **Programme de la Refondation** (refoundation programme) to a SADC delegation, outlining the 18-month action plan that includes national consultations leading to institutional and electoral reforms. So far, only consultations at regional level have begun.

US delegation holds talks on the Vara Mada project

A delegation of senior **United States (US)** officials [met](#) Randrianirina and **Rajaonarison** at the **State Palace** in **Iavoloha** on 17 June to discuss bilateral relations. The delegation included, amongst others, assistant secretary of state for African Affairs, **Nick Checker**, and senior advisor for Africa, **Christopher Kulukundi**. Following the meeting, Randrianirina stated that discussions had centred on identifying opportunities to expand bilateral cooperation in areas of mutual interest that offer benefits to both countries.

After the interview at the presidential palace, the delegation headed to the lower house of parliament in **Tsimbazaza** to meet **Assemblée Nationale** president, **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko**. Following the meeting, he [revealed](#) that the **Vara Mada** mining project had been one of the main topics of discussion with the US delegation emphasising that this is a large-scale project that will generate significant financial benefits for Madagascar. Despite this meeting, Randrianasoloniaiko maintains that he remains opposed to the mining project.

In April, Rajaonarison undertook his first official visit to **Washington (US)**; officially, the purpose of his visit was to negotiate the renewal of **African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA)** so that Madagascar could continue to benefit from it. However, Rajaonarison is reported to have held talks with US assistant secretary of state, **Christopher Landau**, regarding the Vara Mada project.

Formerly known as **Base Toliara**, the Vara Mada project has always been a source of tension in the southern part of the country, facing violent protests from the local population due to its potential impact on the ecosystem (baobab trees) and water resources. Suspended by the Malagasy government in 2019, the mining project was renamed Vara Mada in 2024 following a change of ownership. The US group **Energy Fuels** acquired the project and launched a new phase, modifying its approach towards local communities. Focusing primarily on the extraction of mineralised sand containing ilmenite, as well as zircon and rutile deposits, Vara Mada concentrates its activities at the

Ranobe site, 46km from **Toliara**, in the **Atsimo-Andrefana Region**. This is the largest US investment in Madagascar to date, with an initial investment cost of \$890m.

When asked about his stance on this US mining project during a special programme broadcast on national television on 31 May, **Randrianirina** stated that he had set out four conditions for investors: the injection of foreign direct investment, job creation, respect for the environment, and harmonious coexistence with the local population.

Planner

Aug 2026 **Antananarivo (Madagascar) Assemblée Nationale** president **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko** to chair the 59th **Southern African Development Community (SADC) Parliamentary Forum** plenary session

Chronology

15 Jul 2026 **Antananarivo (Madagascar) REAL TV. Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) president, **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko**, says the case of former president **Andry Rajoelina** will be discussed during the forthcoming extraordinary sessions of parliament;

14 Jul 2026 **Ivandry (Madagascar) TV PLUS**. In his speech to mark **France's** Independence Day, the French ambassador to Madagascar, **Arnaud Guillois**, says that France has opted for constructive engagement alongside the Refoundation regime since its establishment in September 2025;

13 Jul 2026 **Antananarivo (Madagascar) CINU Antananarivo**. A joint high-level mission from the **African Union** and the **United Nations** is visiting Madagascar until 18 July to support national efforts to promote an inclusive political process;

8 Jul 2026 **Antananarivo (Madagascar) Presidency of Madagascar**. Transitional president, **Michael Randrianirina**, describes the recent spate of child disappearances and murders in Antananarivo as "terrorism";

7 Jul 2026 **Iavoloha (Madagascar) Presidency of Madagascar**. Transitional president, **Michaël Randrianirina**, meets the **International Monetary Fund** representative in Madagascar, **Kodjovi Eklou**, to discuss the automatic adjustment of fuel prices;

6 Jul 2026 **Tsimbazaza (Madagascar) TV PLUS. Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) president **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko** calls on the **Inspection Général de l'Etat (IGE)** to audit the management of parliament's funds;

6 Jul 2026 **Washington (United States) World Bank**. The **World Bank** approves funding of \$225m for the **PRODUIRE2** programme of which some will be allocated to rebuilding homes in **Toamasina** that were devastated by **Cyclone Gezani**;

5 Jul 2026 **Soanierana (Madagascar) Presidency of Madagascar**. Transitional president, **Michaël Randrianirina**, condemns the actions of individuals' intent on destabilising the country at any cost;

3 Jul 2026 **Ivandry (Madagascar) Presidency of Madagascar**. The presidential guard opens fire on drones following transitional president, **Michaël Randrianirina's** motorcade;

30 Jun 2026 **Antananarivo (Madagascar) L'Express de Madagascar**. The leaders of the transitional regime reject a **Southern African Development Community (SADC)** statement calling for the release of political prisoners and the return of political exiles.

26 Jun 2026 **Iavoloha (Madagascar) Presidency of Madagascar**. Transitional president, **Michaël Randrianirina**, states in his speech marking the 66th anniversary of independence that Madagascar is not yet fully politically and economically independent;

26 Jun 2026 **Mahamasina (Madagascar) TVM. Kenya's President William Ruto and Comoros' President Azali Assoumani** attend the military parade as part of the celebrations marking the 66th anniversary of Madagascar's independence;

22 Jun 2026 **Banjul (Gambia)** *VÉRITÉ HEBDO*. Economy and finance minister **Ramiarison Herinjatovo** says during the **African Caucus 2026** in **Gambia** that Madagascar is banking on more active integration in the **African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)** to expand its economic opportunities;

20 Jun 2026 **Mahanoro (Madagascar)** *Ministry of Mines*. A team from the mines minister, together with members of the **Unité régionale de la police des mines** (regional mining police unit) seize two pieces of machinery used by foreign nationals for illegal gold mining activities at **Ambodimanga I**;

18 Jun 2026 **Tsimbazaza (Madagascar)** *TVM*. **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) members vote to appoint their two new representatives to the **Haute Cour Constitutionnelle (HCC)** (high constitutional court), namely **Faralahy Célestion Razafindramasy** and **Honoré Vazison**;

18 Jun 2026 **Iavoloha (Madagascar)** *Presidency of Madagascar*. Transitional president, **Michaël Randrianirina**, receives a **United States (US)** delegation led by the US ambassador to Madagascar, **Claire Pierangelo**, at the **State Palace** in Iavoloha.

17 Jun 2026 **Ambohidahy (Madagascar)** *REAL TV*. **Noelson William** and **Georges Merlin Rasolo Nandrasana**, two members of the **Haute Cour Constitutionnelle (HCC)** (high constitutional court) elected by the **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly), tender their resignations;

17 Jun 2026 **Tsimbazaza (Madagascar)** *NEWS MADA*. **Assemblée Nationale** (national assembly) president, **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko**, maintains his opposition to the **Vara Mada** mining project, formerly known as **Base Toliara**;

17 Jun 2026 **Tsimbazaza (Madagascar)** *TVM*. Economy and finance minister, **Ramiarison Herinjatovo**, outlines the main points of the budgetary adjustment in the **2026 Amending Finance Act** to members of parliament.

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