**Dita Charanzová,** *on behalf of the ALDE Group***.** – Madam President, it is unfortunate that we are having to discuss Madagascar today. After the last elections we were all hopeful that the situation would improve, but this is not happening. Madagascar is truly in a dire state. While the outbreak of the plague has recently been dominating the headlines, there are many other serious issues threatening the well‑being of its citizens and undermining their human rights.

The reports of the government arbitrarily detaining human rights defenders, journalists and activists, and the cases of extrajudicial killing, are alarming and disturbing. This needs to end.

As Madagascar enters a new election year, the EU should be more actively engaging in helping the country to strengthen democracy and the rule of law and should provide as much technical assistance as necessary to this end.