

Madagascar: UN chief commends leaders, State institutions following 'historic milestone' election

Following a run-off election for the Presidency of Madagascar which saw former leader Andry Rajoelina declared the winner on Tuesday, the UN chief has commended all those who contributed to the "peaceful and orderly" voting process that began at the end of November.

[Secretary-General](#) António Guterres said [in a statement](#) that "the Independent Electoral Commission (CENI) and the High Constitutional Court (HCC), civil society and religious leaders, as well as the leadership of the Government", should be "commended for being part of this historic milestone."

In a hotly-contested campaign, 44-year-old Mr. Rajoelina won the 19 December run-off with more than 55 per cent of the vote, while his main rival for the Indian Ocean island's top job, another former President, Marc Ravalomanana, took more than 44 per cent, in figures released by the HCC, and quoted in media reports.

[World Bank figures](#) show that in 2017, around three-quarters of Malagasys were living in extreme poverty, earning \$1.90 or less per day. This is despite steady improvements to the economy overall since constitutional order was restored, in 2014 following 5 years of political crisis. President-elect Rajoelina, first served during that period as President of the transitional Government.

"The Secretary-General notes the announcement of the final results...and congratulates President-elect Andry Rajoelina," said the statement. "He also commends all stakeholders for the peaceful and orderly conclusion of the presidential election."

"The Secretary-General will continue to follow developments in the country through his Special Adviser, Mr. Abdoulaye Bathily, with the support of the [United Nations Country Team](#), and in close coordination with the African Union, the Southern African Development Community and other international partners," the statement continued.

The fifth-largest island in the world, located off the coast of southeast Africa, Madagascar is also home to many unique animal species including its famous lemurs; and a centre for vanilla and cloves production, as well as tourism.