## CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL AND DEFENSE POLICY

### **COUNTRY PROFILE**

#### FOR INFORMATION

#### **MADAGASCAR**

## **Country Information**

- Historical Background<sup>1</sup>
  - Madagascar became a French colony in 1896, gaining independence in 1960.
     Since independence Madagascar has undergone various constitutional reforms and ruling types, and only became classified as a true constitutional democracy in 1992 with free presidential and National Assembly elections. Since open elections the country has shifted from one political leader to another, with the 2001

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### Police Force<sup>2</sup>

- The security forces in Madagascar are separated into two main groups; The National Police are charged with maintaining peace and security within urban centers, and the Gendarmerie is primarily responsible for the same duties outside of the major urban areas. The public security forces in Madagascar lack crucial resources to be able to effectively provide security assistance to citizens in a timely manner, or in some cases provide services at all.
- The President also has access to a small security force that is not bound to the authority of the Minister of the Interior (Police) or the Minister of Defense (Military).

# Military;<sup>3</sup>

- The People's Armed Forces of Madagascar are made up of 4 forces; the Intervention Force, the Development Force, the Aeronaval Force, and the National Gendarmerie (Acts as a police force). The Malagasy Armed Forced take up 0.69% of the country's GDP. Military service is male only, between 18-25 years of age, with no conscription. There is a service obligation of 18 months in the military or civilian equivalent. The National Gendarmerie age of service is between 20-30 years of age, and as high as 35 years of age for recruits with prior military service.
  - Active Personnel: 21,600 (13,500 Frontline, 8,100 Reserve)
    - Land Force: 12 Tanks, 103 Armored Fighting Vehicles, 17 Towed-Artillery.
    - Air Force: Total 20 aircraft; 6 transport aircraft, 2 trainer aircraft, 4 helicopters.
    - Naval Force: Total 8 vessels; 7 coastal defense craft.

### **Security and Social Issues**

While Madagascar is considered relatively safe in comparison to other African nations, the recent political instability and economic hardships have made the state an area of potential conflict. Over the past 4 years crime and social instability have increased in intensity, making the

Organized crime is not a major problem in Madagascar, however there are reports
of significant mid- and senior-level military and government officials being
involved in illegal activities. There have also been reports of public security
forces using their weapons to conduct home invasions, or loaning their weapons
to criminal elemen

food/gas shortages, risk of natural catastrophes, and the unpredictability of Malagasy politics.

# 3. Corruption<sup>7</sup>

 There are reports that both the government and public security forces in Madagascar suffer from widespread corruption. Observers in Madagascar estimate that 40% of the country's gross domestic product stemmed from illicit activities and corruption in 2013, 20% higher than estimates during the 1990's. improved their reading and writing abilities. Access to secondary and tertiary education remains limited for the vast majority of the population, with access to higher education being more difficult.

# 6. Disease

• Plague: In 2014, Madagascar had r

 Madagascar is a source for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Trafficking in persons has increased due to the lack of economic development and political instability. The Malagasy government has initiated programs to curb the spread of human trafficking, however they have not been implemented completely and do not address the root causes of trafficking in Madagascar.

#### 9. Resource Issues

- Mining: The mining sector in Madagascar has been slow to revitalize itself after the 2009 military coup, and has only recently been able to begin to restore operations. There is uncertainty over the direction the current government will take, or if it will remain in power given the political atmosphere of the country, leading mining companies to be hesitant to completely resume activities in the country until the situation is under control.<sup>15</sup>
  - There have been instances of strikes by workers and local residents at mines asking for increased services and security precautions on mining sites. For example, in March of 2015 there was a strike on a Sherritt International Corp. mine, reducing the output of the mine. The mine resumed full-scale operations after 3 weeks.<sup>16</sup>
- Forestry: The levels of corruption and the general absence of rule of law has
  created a permissive environment for illegal logging and the export of rare
  hardwoods, primarily from northern forests. Madagascar is facing issues with
  illegal logging and deforestation, with many cleared areas not being rehabilitated
  afterwards or protected areas being infringed on by illegal loggers. The illegal
  logging industry has also had a negative effect on protected wildlife in the area,

development does not guarantee quality drinking water. In terms of sanitation, only 11% has access to adequate sanitation facilities. The Malagasy government has been slow to adopt regulation concerning maritime development and management strategies, leading to a fisheries sector that is using unsustainable fisheries practices, as well as coastal development that harms the natural habitats of marine life. Employment issues have forced sectors of the Malagasy population to turn towards fishing to sustain themselves, and there has been an increase in informal settlement development along the coast. In

 Agriculture: While Madagascar has a large and relatively stable agricultural sector it faces numerous issues in regards to its ability to provide food for its population. The most pressing issues facing the agricultural industry in Madagascar come from climate change and infestations of crop destroying insects. Climate change has increased the amount of droughts the country