

CHINA RARE EARTH CONTROL EU working with G7 partners on response

AFP, Brussels
The EU is coordinating with G7 partners on a response to China's "unjustified" export controls on rare earths, the bloc's trade commissioner Maros Sefcovic said yesterday.

China last week announced new controls on the export of rare-earth technologies. It is the world's leading producer of the minerals used to make magnets crucial to the auto, electronics and defence industries.

"Such restrictions have already forced some EU companies to halt production, causing real economic harm. This is not about security or non-proliferation. These controls are targeting civilian industries directly," Sefcovic said.



Protesters hold a slogan reading "Right to have pension at the age of 65" as they take part in a demonstration during a national day of action against the austerity of the federal Arizona government, in Brussels on October 14, 2025. The strike is the last in a series to hit the European country since Flemish nationalist Bart De Wever took office as prime minister in February. Grappling with a budget deficit whose size violates European Union rules, the government is looking to reform pensions and make other savings that have infuriated trade unions.

PHOTO: AFP

Truce does not mean impunity Says Spain prime minister on Gaza 'genocide'

AFP, Madrid

Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said yesterday the truce between Hamas and Israel must not come at the expense of holding accountable those responsible for the "genocide" in Gaza.

"Peace cannot mean forgetting; it cannot mean impunity," the Socialist premier said during an interview with Cadena Ser radio.

"Those who were key actors in the genocide perpetrated in Gaza must answer to justice, there can be no impunity," he added when asked about the possibility of legal proceedings against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Spain, one of the most vocal critics in Europe of Israel's offensive in Gaza, announced in September that its prosecutor would investigate "serious violations" of human rights in the Palestinian territory in coordination with the International Criminal Court.

The court has issued arrest warrants for Netanyahu and Israel's former defence minister Yoav Gallant.

Sanchez, who attended a peace summit on Gaza in Egypt on Monday, reaffirmed that Spain's arms embargo on shipments to and from Israel remains in place. "We will maintain this embargo until the process is consolidated and definitively moves towards peace," he said.

Sanchez also suggested Spain could take part in future efforts to secure peace and aid reconstruction in Gaza.

UN aid for Rohingya refugee children faces 'funding cliff'

AFP, Geneva

The United Nations warned yesterday that its ability to help children in the sprawling Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh was rapidly shrinking and would soon fall off a "funding cliff".

The UN children's agency UNICEF said conditions in the camps were already dire and would only get worse in 2026 as financial support dries up.

Around a million largely Muslim Rohingya fled a military crackdown in neighbouring Myanmar's Rakhine state, launched in 2017, and now live in the beachside town of Cox's Bazar.

"A funding crisis is unfolding, and it's threatening to erase years of progress for the Rohingya children," said Carla Haddad Mardini, UNICEF's private fundraising and partnerships chief, after returning from Cox's Bazar.

"It was disheartening to watch classrooms close, services shrink, and the futures of hundreds of thousands of children that are hanging by a thread.

"We're doing everything possible to really stretch every dollar -- but we're running out of options."

She said education, water, sanitation and hygiene assistance were among the services hardest hit.

Bangladesh has recorded a surge of refugees from Myanmar since early 2024, with 150,000 more Rohingya arriving.

But the surge comes at a time when the United States --



Rohingya refugee children wait to receive food outside the distribution center at Palong Khali refugee camp in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, on November 17, 2017.

FILE PHOTO: REUTERS

traditionally the world's top donor -- has slashed foreign aid, causing havoc in the humanitarian sector across the globe.

Other major donor countries are also tightening their belts.

Successive aid cuts have already caused severe hardship among Rohingya in the overcrowded settlements, where many rely on aid and suffer from rampant malnutrition.

"Indications are that the situation will be even more dire next year," said Haddad Mardini.

"The overall Rohingya response faces a funding cliff in early 2026.

"We're progressing towards this funding cliff at high speed -- with worst-case projections

suggesting that already-insufficient contributions could fall by half."

She said that despite efficiency savings, merging aid programmes and localising support, "no amount of cost-cutting can offset such a deep decline".

Haddad Mardini said there were several armed groups operating in the region, with 685 cases of child recruitment recorded so far this year -- more than five times the number for all of 2024.

"Seeing an increase in recruitment is extremely worrying for the future," she said.

Haddad Mardini said severe acute malnutrition among children was now at its highest level since the crisis spilt over in 2017.

SPYING CHARGES Iran hands down prison sentences to 2 French people

AFP, Tehran

Iranian authorities yesterday handed down lengthy prison sentences to two French nationals after convicting them on multiple charges, including spying for Israel, the judiciary said.

The judiciary's Mizan Online website did not identify the two French nationals, but two sources close to the case told AFP that academics Cecile Kohler, 40, and Jacques Paris, 72, were the citizens sentenced.

The date of their arrest in May 2022, on the final day of their holiday, does not tally with the date noted by Mizan, March 2023.

Mizan said one of the defendants was sentenced "to six years in prison for spying for the French intelligence services, five years for association to commit a crime against national security, and 20 years in exile for intelligence cooperation with the Zionist regime".

The other defendant was "sentenced to 10 years in prison for spying for the French intelligence services, five years for assisting in intelligence cooperation with the Zionist regime", Mizan added. Under Iranian law, jail sentences run concurrently.

Madagascar's military takes power, president impeached

REUTERS, Antananarivo

Madagascar's military has taken charge of the Indian Ocean island, an army colonel said yesterday, after President Andry Rajoelina fled abroad during a standoff with youth-led protesters and security forces.

"We have taken the power," Colonel Michael Randrianirina, who led a mutiny of soldiers joining anti-government Gen Z demonstrators, said on national radio.

Randrianirina added that the military was dissolving all institutions except the lower house of parliament or National Assembly, which voted to impeach Rajoelina minutes earlier.

In a day of turmoil for the nation off east Africa, the 51-year-old leader had sought to dissolve the assembly by decree. Despite flying out on a French military jet, Rajoelina is refusing to step down in defiance of weeks of Gen Z protests demanding his resignation and widespread defections in the army.

The presidency did not immediately react to Randrianirina's comments but earlier said the assembly meeting was unconstitutional and thus any resolution "null and void."

Rajoelina has said he has moved to a safe place because of threats to his life. An opposition diplomat, a military source and a foreign diplomat told Reuters he had fled the country on Sunday aboard a French military plane.

ESCALATING DEMOS

Demonstrations erupted in the country on September 25 over water and power shortages and quickly escalated into an uprising over broader grievances, including corruption, bad governance and a lack of basic services.

The anger mirrored recent protests against ruling elites elsewhere, including Nepal and Morocco.

On Tuesday, at Antananarivo's 13 May Square, along the main drag lined with palm trees and French colonial buildings, thousands of protesters danced, marched, sang songs and waved banners denouncing Rajoelina as a French stooge because of his dual citizenship and support from Madagascar's former coloniser.

Many were waving Malagasy flags and the signature Gen Z protest banner of a skull and crossbones from the Japanese "One Piece" anime series.

Final version of July Charter sent to all parties

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Formed in mid-February, the consensus commission was tasked with reviewing and adopting proposals from six major reform bodies covering the constitution, judiciary, electoral system, Anti-Corruption Commission, and public administration.

After two rounds of discussions with political parties, the consensus commission drafted 84 proposals, half involving constitutional reforms. BNP and its like minded parties had issued notes of dissent on at least nine issues.

On September 10, the commission sent the final draft version of the charter to the parties. The next day, it started the third round of talks with parties on the ways of implementation of the charter.

During the talks, the parties reached a consensus that non-constitutional reforms will be enacted via ordinances and executive orders, and a referendum will be held on reforms

requiring constitutional changes.

They, however, failed to agree on the timing, procedures, and framework of the referendum.

The commission will now combine expert and party opinions to prepare a set of recommendations for the charter's implementation and submit it separately to the interim government after the signing ceremony on October 17, a commission source said.

"No further opinions will be taken from the political parties. The final version is basically the same as the previous final draft, with minor language corrections," the source said.

The ceremony will take place at the South Plaza of Jatiya Sangsad with Chief Adviser Prof Muhammad Yunus as the chief guest.

Besides the reform issues, the charter seeks pledges from the parties to enshrine the document in the constitution, either as a schedule or in another

appropriate place.

It seeks commitment that the parties will provide constitutional and state recognition to the people's 16-year long uninterrupted struggle to establish democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and especially the historical significance of the July mass uprising of 2024.

The document also commits parties to ensure justice for victims of enforced disappearances, killings and torture during the 16-year struggle against authoritarian rule as well as for all killings during the uprising.

It calls for state recognition of the martyrs, proper assistance to their families, and medical care and rehabilitation for the injured.

implement its decisions.

It further stipulates that decisions that are immediately implementable must be carried out without delay by the interim government and relevant authorities.

The July National Charter 2025 is a "tribute to the heroic martyrs and injured of the anti-fascist democratic movement over 16 years and the mass uprising of July-August 2024", says the charter.

The document stands as a "gesture of sympathy for those arrested and imprisoned, and as an expression of gratitude to all who directly or indirectly took part in that historic uprising", it adds.

In the preamble, it affirms that the document "reflects the aspirations of the people and must be implemented in full as a consensus outcome achieved through a continuous process".

It further highlights that the people are the true owners of the state, and their will is the highest law.

Russia strikes aid convoy in Ukraine: UN

AFP, Kyiv

Russian forces struck a UN aid convoy in the partially occupied southern Kherson region of Ukraine yesterday, Kyiv and the UN said, adding there were no casualties in the attack.

The United Nations said its convoy of four vehicles was clearly marked and came under attack from Russian drones and artillery while delivering aid to the frontline town of Bilozerka.

"Such attacks are utterly unacceptable. Aid workers are protected by international humanitarian law and should never be attacked," said the UN's Humanitarian Coordinator for Ukraine Matthias Schmale.

He added that two World Food Programme trucks were damaged in the strike, while local authorities said the remaining two were unscathed.

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e-Tender Notice

Sl. No.	Package No.	Package description	Tender method	Tender ID No.	Tender opening date & time
1.	46.06.2000.000.315.31.0122.25	Supply and Installation of LS Vacuum Contactor Switch (VCS) Contoller Card under Nasirabad Water Management Control & Booster.	OTM	1159820	26-Oct-2025 12:00:00

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GD-2200

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