

# SEYCHELLES 2020 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Seychelles is a multiparty republic governed by a president, Cabinet of Ministers, and National Assembly. In joint presidential and legislative elections from October 22-24, voters elected six-time presidential candidate Wavel Ramkalawan of opposition party Linyon Demokratik Seselwa with 54.9 percent of the vote. The Linyon Demokratik Seselwa party also won 20 of 26 seats in the National Assembly. International election observers determined the elections to have been free, credible, and transparent, despite some reports of vote buying and voter intimidation.

The Seychelles Police Force, which includes unarmed police and an armed paramilitary Police Special Support Wing, the Anti-Narcotics Bureau, and the Marine Police Unit, have primary responsibility for internal security and report to the minister of internal affairs. The Seychelles People's Defense Forces--composed of the infantry, the special forces, the coast guard, and the air force--are responsible for external security and assist police with internal security as needed. These military services report to the president, who acts as minister of defense. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces. Members of the security forces committed some abuses.

The October 22-24 election was the first time that Seychellois voters elected an opposition party candidate as president since 1976. Former president Danny Faure of the United Seychelles Party immediately accepted the election results, conceded, and supported a peaceful and smooth transfer of power. On October 26, President Ramkalawan was sworn into office.

Significant human rights issues included: lack of investigation of and accountability for violence against women, trafficking in persons, and the worst forms of child labor.

The government had mechanisms in place to identify and punish officials who may commit human rights abuses.











































## SEYCHELLES

number of safety and health inspectors did not effectively enforce compliance with health and safety laws.

In 2019 nearly 19,000 migrant workers, including individuals from Bangladesh, India, China, Kenya, Madagascar, Philippines, and other countries in South Asia, made up approximately 20 percent of the working population. They were employed primarily in construction, agriculture, and commercial fishing sectors where traffickers sometimes subjected them to forced labor, including nonpayment of wages, physical abuse, fraudulent recruitment schemes, delayed payment of their salaries, and failure to provide them with adequate housing, resulting in substandard living conditions. There were also reports of passport seizures and confiscations to prevent workers from changing employers prior to the end of their two-year contracts.

In 2019 a high-level government official, his wife, and three businessmen were arrested on charges of human trafficking. The government official was convicted on a lesser charge of falsifying documents for issuing false work permits to at least 27 foreign workers in exchange for monetary compensation.

Occupational accidents occurred most frequently in the accommodations, food services, transport, and storage industries.