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Answer given by Mr Síkela
on behalf of the European Commission
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The EU and South Africa (SA) have a Strategic Partnership based, among other, on democratic values and human rights, as exemplified by the recent EU-SA Summit, where the EU announced the Global Gateway Investment Package with South Africa to which the Honourable Member refers. This package will mainly support projects promoting SA's clean and just energy transition. In the context of this partnership, the EU and SA are engaged in a regular human rights dialogue.

With Global Gateway, the EU aims to embed democratic principles, and transparency in all investments. The EU assesses in each country whether the required pre-conditions for investments exist, including regarding human rights.

When the Commission becomes aware of any suspected cases of fraud, corruption or any other illegal activity affecting the EU budget, it takes all measures deemed fit and informs without delay the European Anti-Fraud Office and, where applicable, the European Public Prosecutor's Office.

The new Financial Regulation (Article 6(3))¹ makes an explicit reference to the EU values, including human dignity, freedom, democracy, and the rights of minorities, and requires that the EU budget be implemented in full respect of such values. In cases of serious human rights violations, the Commission may take precautionary and/or corrective measures such as suspending or terminating contracts, carrying out internal or external audits, verifying expenditures, and applying other relevant controls.

¹ https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509?utm_source.