

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002972/26
to the Commission**

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(15 July 2026)

Subject: Human rights due diligence in Global Gateway projects following the findings in the Berta Cáceres case and the role of development finance institutions

The 2026 report by the Interdisciplinary Group of Independent Experts ⁽¹⁾ for the case concerning the murder of Berta Cáceres identified serious governance and financing failures in the Agua Zarca project. One of the financiers of the project was Dutch development bank FMO, a key player in the Team Europe approach within the Global Gateway strategy. Berta's family and civil society organisations argue that FMO's response has not adequately addressed accountability, access to remedy or prevention of future harm.

1. Given the limited scope of the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) and the removal of the obligation for companies to implement climate transition plans, what steps is the Commission taking to establish binding and standardised due diligence rules for all Global Gateway projects, regardless of whether participating companies are covered by the CSDDD?
2. How does the Commission assess the adequacy of the human rights safeguards currently applied by development finance institutions involved in Global Gateway, including FMO and other European development finance institutions?
3. What binding mechanisms does the Commission require in Global Gateway projects to protect human rights defenders and ensure independent monitoring, meaningful consultation with affected communities and access to effective remedy, in order to prevent cases such as the assassination of Berta Cáceres?

Submitted: 15.7.2026

Answer given by Mr Sikela on behalf of the European Commission
(10 September 2026)

The Global Gateway (GG) supports sustainable quality investments with high social, environmental and governance standards. All GG projects apply a human rights-based approach as requested by the Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument — Global Europe (NDICI-GE) instrument regulation ⁽¹⁾.

In 2025, the Commission also strengthened contractual provisions on human rights and introduced an internal complaints procedure for external actions to support right holders in claiming their rights. Regular dialogue with partners, project visits and monitoring help ensure safeguards are respected.

Under GG, the Commission works in indirect management with development finance institutions that are pillar-assessed under the EU Financial Regulation ⁽²⁾.

Pillar assessment is a review by the Commission of the systems and procedures of entities to check if they fulfil the criteria to be entrusted with budget implementation.

Pillar 7, for instance, covers entities' capacity to detect situations that would exclude recipients from access to funding such as fraud, corruption or human trafficking.

It is important to distinguish between corporate due diligence as set out in the Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD) ⁽³⁾, and the requirements for investments under GG. The CSDDD goes beyond a specific investment project.

It requires large companies to identify and address adverse human rights and environmental impacts in their own operations and those of their subsidiaries and to engage continuously with their business partners.

¹ https://9ac69281-0895-4461-a8ab-fe779cfb9e33.filesusr.com/ugd/94b2ad_1bb0f67f3fab4fbc624ecaa86856164.pdf.

⁽¹⁾ Article 8.2 of the NDICI Global Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/947.

⁽²⁾ Regulation (EU, Euratom) 2024/2509 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 September 2024 on the financial rules applicable to the general budget of the Union: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/2509/oj/eng>.

⁽³⁾ Directive (EU) 2024/1760, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2024/1760/oj/eng>, of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 June 2024 on corporate sustainability due diligence and amending Directive (EU) 2019/1937, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/1937/oj/eng>, and Regulation (EU) 2023/2859, <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2023/2859/oj/eng>, OJ L, 2024/1760, 5.7.2024. Note: enters into application mid-2029.