



Republic of **Mauritius**

The diplomat Newsletter

Ministry of foreign affairs, regional integration and international trade



Bilateral relations with India

Mauritius warms to State Visit by Indian President Smt. Pratibha Patil



Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil, President of the Republic of India, was on a State Visit to Mauritius from April 24 to April 28, 2011. She was accompanied by Indian Minister of Shipping G.K. Vasan, three Indian parliamentarians, Mr. Upendra Kushwaha, Mr. Hamdullah Sayeed, and Mr. A.T. Patil, and by a high level business delegation consisting of 57 Indian business people led by Mr. Navin Raheja of Raheja Developers, and coming from diverse sectors such as the cement industry, telecommunication, education, information technology, agriculture, agro chemicals, fertilizers, infrastructure, finance and legal services. The Indian President was also accompanied by her spouse, Dr. Devisingh Ramsingh Shekhawat.

During the visit, the Indian President has met H.E. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, President of Mauritius, and held discussions with H.E. Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, Prime Minister of Mauritius, on bilateral, regional and international issues of mutual interest. The Leader of the Opposition, H.E. Mr. Paul Raymond Bérenger, the Chief Justice of Mauritius, Justice Bernard Sik Yuen, and the Speaker of the National Assembly of Mauritius, H.E. Mr. Rajkeswur Purryag called on Smt. Patil.

As part of the State Visit, the Indian President addressed the National Assembly of Mauritius, where she hailed the parliamentary institutions and electoral processes of Mauritius. In her address, the visiting Indian president said: *"Parliamentary institutions symbolise a national purpose, and are representative of the aspirations of the people. I congratulate Mauritius for the successful conduct of its electoral processes. The democratic spirit that Mauritius has always believed in resonates in*

your august national assembly, which is the citadel of democracy, freedom and justice. I congratulate Mauritius for holding aloft the torch of democracy with conviction."

She highlighted that India and Mauritius were "determined to confront" terrorism and piracy through joint action. *"I would also like to say that India values the continued support given by Mauritius to India's concerns and aspirations. Moreover, Smt. Patil also said that "India also appreciates the unswerving and consistent support of Mauritius to India's candidature for permanent membership of an expanded United Nations Security Council."*



President Patil unveiled a bust of Smt. Indira Gandhi at the Indira Gandhi Centre for Indian Culture, and met the Indian community in Mauritius. Moreover, the University of Mauritius has conferred a Degree of Doctor of Civil Law *honoris causa* on the President, who also visited heritage sites such as the Aapravasi Ghat and the Le Morne. Hon'ble President will address the India-Mauritius Business Meet; will be in Mauritius during the State Visit of the Indian President.

The Indian President's visit to Mauritius is a part of the process of exchanges at the highest political level between India and Mauritius. The two countries have enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation that are firmly rooted in history, tradition and cultural affinities. India-Mauritius partnership today is mutually beneficial, comprehensive, deep and diverse. The commitment of the two countries to democratic ideals, values and pluralism reinforces the close ties that they enjoy.

India-Mauritius approaches on many regional and international issues, such as international terrorism, piracy, reform of the international institutions, including the

United Nations, especially the Security Council, coincide. Both countries have a tradition of strong cooperation in multilateral fora.



The State Visit of the President of India to Mauritius provides a further impetus to the consolidation and development of the historical friendship and cooperation between the two countries and has enhanced the India-Mauritius partnership.

Diplomatic relations between India and Mauritius were established in 1948. India is our third largest supplier of merchandise goods.

Mauritius and India have signed several bilateral agreements. Some of the important agreements are:

- the Double Taxation Avoidance Convention (1982);
- Bilateral Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (1998);
- Air Services Agreement (1972; amended in 1995);
- Agreement for Cooperation in Information Technology (2000);
- MOU on Cooperation in Biotechnology (2002), Extradition Treaty (2003);
- MOU on Cooperation against Terrorism (2005);
- MOU on Cooperation in the field of Environment (2005);
- Mutual Legal Assistance Treaty in Criminal Matters (2005);
- Agreement on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons (2005);
- MOU for Cooperation in the field of Hydrography (2005);

- MOU for Cooperation on Consumer Protection and Legal Metrology (2005);
- MOU for setting up a Preferential Trade Agreement (2005);
- MOU Concerning Cooperation in the Exchange of Finance Intelligence Related to Money Laundering & Financing of Terrorism (2008)

Moreover, the 2nd India-Africa Forum will be held on 24-25 May 2011 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Following the progress made in the implementation of the Africa-India Framework of Cooperation and its plan of action, Africa and India would meet again in Addis Ababa to further enhance partnership and shared vision.

The India-Africa Forum was set up to reinforce the multidimensional relations existing between Africa and India, and share benefit from the rich historical background as well as natural resources of both Africa and India. Its objective is also to give a new dimension to the Africa – India cooperation through a concrete plan of action.



The Republic of India is a constitutional democracy made up of 28 states and seven union and national territories. The Constitution came into force on 26 January 1950 and lists the powers of the Federal Government (known as 'the Centre' or 'Union Government'), those of the states, and those which are shared responsibilities. The

President of India is obliged to act on the advice of the Council of Ministers, chosen by the Prime Minister.

Parliament is bicameral, comprising the 543-member Lok Sabha ('people's' or lower house) and the 245-member Rajya Sabha ('states' or upper house). Lok Sabha members are elected by universal adult suffrage every five years (except for two nominated Anglo-Indian members) using the 'first past the post' voting system. The Rajya Sabha is not subject to dissolution; one-third of its members retire every second year.

Smt. Patil assumed office as the 12th President of India on July 25, 2007. She is the first woman to have been elected Head of State of the Republic of India. Prior to election as the President, Smt. Patil was the Governor of Rajasthan from November 8, 2004 till June 21, 2007. She enjoys the unique distinction of not having lost a single election that she contested till date.

Mrs. Pratibha Devisingh Patil has held various positions both in the Government and the Legislative Assembly of Maharashtra. She has been responsible for many ministerial portfolios such as Public Health, Prohibition, Tourism, Housing, Parliamentary Affairs, Social Welfare, Rehabilitation, Cultural Affairs, Education, Urban Development and Civil Supplies. Smt. Patil also served as Leader of Opposition in the Legislative Assembly of Maharashtra from July 1979 to February 1980.



Official Visit of the Hon. Minister Boolell to Madagascar – 8 to 10 April 2011



Dr. the Hon. A. Boolell, in his capacity as Chair of the Ministerial Council of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), led a delegation of the Commission to Madagascar from 8 to 10 April 2011.

Mr. Callixte D'Offay, Secretary-General of the Commission, H.E. Joseph Nourrice, High Commissioner of Seychelles in Pretoria, H.E. Jean Marc Chataigner, Ambassador of France in Antananarivo representing France-Réunion, and our Ambassador Gérard Lemaire, formed part of the delegation.

During the visit, the IOC delegation called on Mr. Andry Rajoelina, President of the Transition Government and Mr. Camille Vital, Prime Minister. It had a working session with Mrs. Yvette Sylla, Minister of Foreign Affairs and met Mr. Pierrot Rajaonarivelo, Minister of Economy and Industry. The delegation also had a meeting with the representatives of the three Mouvances. It further had exchange of views with the CENI (*Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante*), the *Conseil Supérieur de la Transition* (CST), the *Conseil de la Transition* (CT), members of the Civil Society, and representatives of the international community.

At the meetings, the Hon. Minister Boolell emphasized that the purpose of the IOC visit was to build up on the SADC process to accompany Madagascar on its way out of the crisis and to support the transition process. In this regard, he pointed out that the Indian Ocean Commission supports the proposed Road Map of the SADC Mediation as a viable and durable solution to the Malagasy crisis, and in particular, its ultimate objective to restore constitutional order in Madagascar through the holding of credible, free and fair elections. The Hon. Minister Boolell reiterated that Mauritius will provide necessary electoral assistance to Madagascar within an overall international framework of support including that of the United Nations.

The IOC delegation also stressed the need for the CENI to become entirely independent, welcomed the proposal to set up a special electoral court, and encouraged the civil society to play its role in sensitizing and educating the population. It also called upon the SADC and the

AU to endorse the Road Map, and the international community to provide the necessary assistance for its implementation. In this regard, the IOC issued the Communiqué at annex.

Hon. Minister Boolell also had the opportunity to exchange views with the Mauritius Business Community in Madagascar.



Communiqué sur la visite de la COI à Madagascar 8-10 avril 2011

L'honorable Docteur Arvin Boolell, Ministre des Affaires étrangères, de l'Intégration régionale et du Commerce international de la République de Maurice, en sa qualité de Président du Conseil des Ministres de la Commission de l'Océan Indien (COI) a conduit une délégation de la COI à Madagascar du 8 au 10 avril 2011. M. Callixte D'Offay, Secrétaire général de la Commission, SE. Joseph Nourrice, Haut Commissaire des Seychelles à Pretoria et SE. Jean Marc Chataigner, Ambassadeur de France à Antananarivo représentant la France-Réunion, faisaient partie de la délégation.

Lors de la visite, la délégation de la COI a eu des entretiens avec différentes parties prenantes, parmi lesquelles le Président de la HAT, les membres du gouvernement transitoire d'unité nationale et les mouvances, les présidents de la Commission Electorale Indépendante Nationale (CENI), du Conseil Supérieur de la Transition (CST), du Conseil de la transition (CT), et des représentants de la société civile et de la communauté internationale.

La délégation

- A souligné que la COI suit de près la situation à Madagascar compte tenu de la proximité géographique de ses Etats-membres et de leurs spécificités insulaires et de leur vision commune pour la paix et la stabilité dans la région.
- A fait valoir que cette visite fait suite à la décision du Conseil des Ministres de la COI tenu en juin 2010, aux recommandations de la mission conjointe COI / OIF à Madagascar en février 2011, et aux consultations que le Président de la COI a eues avec le Président de la Commission de l'UA et le Secrétaire exécutif de la SADC, en marge du dernier Sommet de l'UA à Addis-Abeba.
- A marqué que le but de sa visite était de soutenir la Feuille de route proposée par la médiation de la SADC et le processus de transition, et de construire sur le processus de la SADC pour accompagner Madagascar vers la sortie de la crise.
- A insisté sur la nécessité de trouver une solution durable à Madagascar en raison des relations culturelles, sociales et commerciales, ainsi que de la coopération diversifiée qui existent entre les pays de la région.
- A souligné que la Feuille de route constitue la seule option viable pour une solution durable et que son objectif ultime est de rétablir l'ordre constitutionnel dans le pays par la tenue d'élections crédibles, libres et équitables, et a salué les efforts sans relâche menés par M. Chissano et son équipe.
- A appelé à l'affirmation de l'indépendance de la CENI, s'est félicité de la proposition de créer une Cour électorale spéciale, et a encouragé la société civile à jouer son rôle dans la sensibilisation et l'éducation de la population.
- A marqué en outre que la feuille de route reste ouverte à la signature d'autres parties intéressées, jusqu'à sa signature, en vue d'en assurer la plus large inclusivité.
- A souligné la nécessité d'une campagne de lobbying en faveur de la Feuille de route.
- A appelé la SADC et l'UA à valider la Feuille de route, et la communauté internationale à fournir l'assistance nécessaire à sa mise en œuvre.
- A décidé de convoquer une réunion du Conseil ministériel de la COI à Maurice pour examiner les modalités d'accompagnement de Madagascar durant la transition et pour identifier les domaines communs de coopération. Les membres de la délégation de la COI ont exprimé leur gratitude aux autorités malgaches pour l'accueil chaleureux qui leur a été réservé au cours de cette visite.

IN BRIEF

❖ Courtesy call by Qatar Ambassador

H.E. Mr. Ali Abdulla Al Mahmoud, Ambassador of the State of Qatar to the Republic of Mauritius, who was on a private visit to Mauritius, paid a courtesy call on Hon. Minister Boolell on Thursday 7 April 2011. He was accompanied by Mr. Yusuf Joomun, Director of the Doha Secondary School.

❖ Credentials by new Namibian HC



H.E. Mr. Marten Nenkete Kapewasha, High Commissioner of the Republic of Namibia to Mauritius with residence in Pretoria, visited Mauritius from 20 to 23 March 2011 to present his credentials to the President of the Republic. He was accompanied by his wife, Mrs. Kapewasha, and by Ms. Bonaventura Hinda, Commercial Counsellor. The High Commissioner paid a courtesy call on Hon. Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, on 22 March 2011 at 13:30 hrs. He also had courtesy calls other Mauritian dignitaries.

❖ **Farewell of Korean Ambassador**



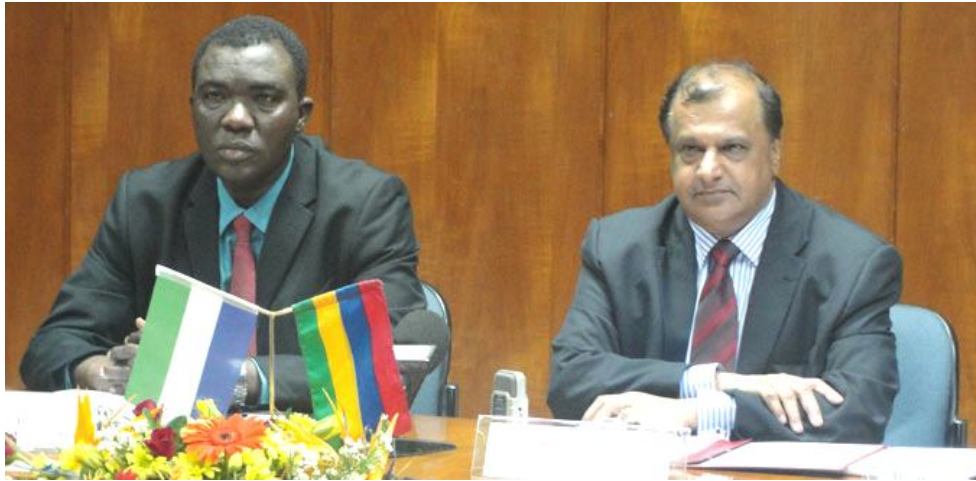
The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Mr. Lee Han-Gon paid a farewell courtesy visit to Mauritius from 21 to 24 March 2011. He paid a courtesy call on the President on Wednesday 23 March 2011. He met Ambassador Koonjul and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs on the 23rd of March 2011.

❖ **MOU Mauritius – IMF on AFRITAC**



Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Ms. Nemat Shafik and Vice Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development of Mauritius, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, shake hands after a signing ceremony on a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for the establishment of the Africa Regional Technical Assistance Center South at the IMF Headquarters on April 18, 2011 in Washington, DC, USA. AFRITAC South, scheduled for opening in late June 2011, will be located in Mauritius, and will cover 13 countries in Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean.

❖ **MOU Mauritius – Sierra Leone**



A high level delegation led by Dr the Hon. Richard Konteh, Minister of Trade and Industry was on official mission in Mauritius on 14-15 April 2011 with the objective of creating awareness about the investment opportunities about Sierra Leone. The delegation had meetings with the private sector and paid courtesy calls to the Hon. Showkutally Soodhun, Minister of Industry and Commerce and Hon Joseph Von Mally, Minister of Fisheries and Rodrigues.

The Board of Investment (BOI) and the Sierra Leone Investment and Export Promotion Agency (SLIEPA) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) aimed at developing intra-regional trade and investment between the two countries. The signing ceremony was held in the presence of the Acting Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Dr Vasant Bunwaree, and Richard Konteh. Both parties agree on the strategic importance of regional cooperation for the promotion of investment in Africa.

❖ **Launching of book on sugar industry**

Minister Arvin Boolell proceeded to the launching of the book “The Supremacy and Twilight of the Mauritius Sugar Industry” by Prof. Roland Lamusse, on Thursday 21 April 2011, at the Mauritius Sugar Industry Research Institute (MSIRI). The book looks at the historical evolution of the sugar industry throughout the decades and years.

❖ **Workshop on negotiating skills**

Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Dr. the Hon. Arvin Boolell, launched a workshop organized by the University of Mauritius at the Link City Hotel, Ebène, on Monday 25 April 2011. The workshop was entitled “Principles of Negotiations”. The University of Mauritius has been selected for the WTO Chair Programme.

❖ **H.E. Kundasamy at Royal Wedding**



H.E. the High Commissioner of Mauritius in the United Kingdom (UK), Mahen Kundasamy, is attending the Royal Wedding of Prince William and Miss Catherine Middleton on Friday 29th April 2011, at the Westminster Abbey, London. H.E. Mr Kundasamy represents the Government and People of Mauritius at the wedding. Moreover, H.E. Mr Kundasamy attended a breakfast meeting on Tuesday 26th April with H.E. Hon Utoni Nujoma, MP, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Namibia. The meeting was an opportunity to discuss political developments in the SADC region.

❖ **Business Day Zambia in Berlin**

Sarajini Seeneevassen-Frers, Mauritian Ambassador in Berlin, Germany, attended the Business Day Zambia event on the 14th April 2011. The event was related to business and investment opportunities in Zambia, and was attended by over 80 participants in Cologne and over 100 participants in Berlin.

❖ **Talk on Doha Development Agenda**

Mr. Sunil Boodhoo, Deputy Director, International Trade, made a presentation on the Doha Development Agenda, on Thursday 21 April 2011, in the conference room of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.