

Debate No. 6 of 2011

RODRIGUES

SECOND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Debate No. 6 of 2011

Sitting of Friday 23rd September 2011

The Assembly met in the Assembly House,
Port Mathurin, at 15.00 hours

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

The National Anthem was played

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ADJOURNMENT

The Executive Council
(Formed by Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar, G.O.S.K.)

Mr. Gaetan Jabeemissar, G.O.S.K.	Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Finance, Economic Affairs, Central Administration, Civil Aviation (administration), Civil Status, Customs and Excise (administration), Education (administration), Fisheries, Industrial Development, Judicial (administration), Legal Services, Marine Parks, Marine Services (administration), Meteorology (administration), Postal Services (administration), Registration, Statistics in respects of Rodrigues, Trade, Commerce and Licensing, Vocational Training, Information Technology and Telecommunications, State Lands, Town and Country Planning, Tourism, Handicraft, Consumer Protection.
Mr.s. Marie Thérèse Clair-Brault	Deputy Chief Commissioner, Commissioner responsible for Arts and Culture, Child Development Unit, Family Welfare, Library Services, Museums, Archives, Historical Sites and buildings, Tourism, Women's Affairs
Mr. Franceau Aubret Grandcourt	Commissioner responsible for Environment, Housing, Infrastructure including Highways and Roads and Public Buildings and Utilities, Transport
Mr. Jean Christian Agathe	Commissioner responsible for Community Development, Employment, Information Technology and Telecommunications, Labour and Industrial Relations, Youth and Sports
Mr. Louis Ange Perrine	Commissioner responsible for Agriculture, Food Production, Forestry, Plant and animal quarantine, State Lands, Town and Country Planning
Mr.s. M. D. Lordana Chan-Meunier	Commissioner responsible for Co-operatives, Fire Services, Health (administration), Prisons and Reforms Institutions (administration), Social Security (administration)
Mr. Jean Daniel Speville	Commissioner responsible for Consumer Protection, Handicraft, Water Resources

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS

Mr. Chairperson	-	Lamvohee, Mr. Joseph Chenlye, C.S.K.
Clerk	-	Parsooramen, Miss Marie Cristelle Joanna
Serjeant-at-Arms	-	Louis, Mr. Jorgenson

MOTION

**RODRIGUES – DRAFT ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND DRAFT
ESTIMATES OF EXPENDITURE FOR FINANCIAL YEAR 2012**

The Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move the motion standing in my name, which reads as follows:-

“This Assembly resolves that for the purposes of section 44(1) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 (as amended) there is approved the Draft Estimates of Revenue and Draft Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2012”.

**TAKE-OFF TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE MODERNISATION
OF RODRIGUES**

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, copies of the Draft Estimates of Revenue and Draft Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year 2012 are being tabled for circulation to members for approval by this Assembly.

M. le Président, la volonté politique est la clef du décollage économique de tout pays. Ce présent gouvernement à cette volonté et détermination pour stimuler la croissance économique à travers les mesures que je vais énoncer lors de ce discours budgétaire. Cependant, sans la concertation des efforts de tout un chacun, Rodrigues ne décollera pas.

L'éducation, la formation d'une main-d'œuvre qualifiée de même qu'un changement de mentalité (*a change of mindset*) sont les pré-requis d'une croissance soutenue. Nous devons construire l'avenir pour que la prochaine génération puisse témoigner de ce que nous leur avons légué.

M. le Président, ce présent Gouvernement Régional du Mouvement Rodriguais œuvre pour la continuité de la stabilité, l'harmonie sociale et l'accroissement du développement économique et ainsi permettre à chaque Rodriguais de réaliser son rêve.

As Ben Okri's would put it, *“because we will not silence our dreams, because we choose life and we will not die, we stand ready to face our awkward and deepest truths. We will not be deaf to the voice of those in pain. We will not be blind to incompetence or greed.”*

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with the launching of the SIDPR in December 2009, Rodrigues is already on the path of strategic planning for sustainable economic growth. In fact, I had a meeting with the UNDP who financed the plan and they have agreed to organise a donor's meeting soon in order to enable us to get access to necessary financial and technical assistance to move forward.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the elaboration of the "Maurice Iles Durables" (MID) Action Plan, the SIDPR formed the basis of the recommendations which came out after the consultative workshop of the MID Action Plan.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is my privilege to present the Budget for fiscal Year 2012 after so much political turmoil on the local scene. Just 252 days back, I had the honour to take charge of the third Mouvement Rodriguais Regional Government, with the challenge of being at the helm at such a difficult juncture. I am deeply conscious of the trust and confidence that the Rodriguan people have bestowed on our Regional Government since we were mandated to be in the driving seat of the affairs of Rodrigues. I am sensitive to the legitimate expectations of rodriguans who are yet engaged and ready to seize the opportunities presented to them.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government recognizes the challenges that this task entails, particularly at a time when the world is still struggling with an unprecedented financial crisis and an economic slowdown which is also affecting the Republic of Mauritius. Indeed, this economic downturn has more direct impact on the Rodriguan economy. However, we are determined to convert our words into deeds. Members would appreciate that a single Budget Speech cannot solve all our problems, nor is it the only instrument to do so. Yet, it is an important means to share the vision of the Regional Government, particularly as we are completing our present term of office. For the next hours or so I shall outline the short and medium terms strategies of this Regional Government focusing on:

- Protecting the vulnerable groups;
- Sustaining employment growth and expanding training opportunities;
- Building economic capacity and promoting investment;
- Removing the barriers hampering economic development; and
- Ensuring equitable sharing of opportunities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, these strategies are in line with the Rostow economic growth model which elaborates the evolution of economic growth in any society over five stages namely: the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take off, the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues has already gone through the first two economic stages and we are now preparing ourselves to enter stage three for an economic growth that is take-off stage which reflects the main theme of my budget.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the take-off requires a group of entrepreneurs in the society who would induce innovation and contribute to boost economic growth. It is therefore in that spirit that we are setting the proper entrepreneurial and investment climate to boost entrepreneurial activities for the proper set up of a modern economic system.

Let's take off to new heights, Mr. Chairperson, Sir.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the theme for this 2012 budget "*Take-off towards sustainable modernisation of Rodrigues*" has not been chosen at random. In fact, I want to focus the attention of the population on our will to propel the economy onto a higher growth level and towards sustainable development bearing in mind that on our path we will have to face the challenges that are awaiting us ahead.

- The *first challenge* is to develop the Rodriguan Economy with a view to counter the problem of unemployment and poverty. Growth of income is important in itself, but it is as important for the resources that it brings in. These resources provide us with the means to bridge the critical gaps that hamper our development efforts, particularly with regard to the welfare of the vulnerable segments of our population.
- The *second challenge* is to provide adequate infrastructural development which has to be sustainable so that no individual, community or region is denied the opportunity to participate in and benefit from the development process.
- The *third challenge* is to re-energize our institutions for delivery of high quality public service with transparency and accountability.

OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development has raised the alarm that although the Mauritian Economy has shown some degree of resilience in the recent past, the economy is not yet on a sustained recovery path. In fact, domestic private investment continues to depress and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) flows may begin to decline significantly. Consequently, growth prospects are now below previous projections and the current accounts and balance of payments face more pressure. Taking these factors into account as well as supply side constraints on the domestic front, preliminary indications are that annual average growth for the period 2012-2014 will remain around 4% instead of the gradual recovery to 5%.

These lower growth projections imply significantly less fiscal revenues in the coming years than planned in the 2011 to 2013 PBB document.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, while coming up with measures in this budget, my Government has had several meetings and consultations with stakeholders of the economy namely the RCSS, operators of the tourism sector, farmers, traders, representatives of financial institutions, different NGOs amongst others. We are thankful to them all for their useful and invaluable proposals and most of their suggestions have been given due consideration.

SECTOR PERFORMANCE AND OUTLOOK

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me to now spell out the sectoral performance during the financial year 2011 and set-out the planned outputs for financial year 2012 in each sector.

AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government is highly committed to improve air access to and from Rodrigues Island. For the take-off of the tourism industry in Rodrigues to new heights, we need a new runway which has the capacity to accommodate bigger aircrafts. Since I took over the Office of Chief Commissioner, I have made the construction of a new runway my top priority. This project has been dragging on for too long.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to announce that finally we awarded the contract for the feasibility study for the construction of a new runway at Sir Gaetan Duval Airport in March this year. Only over the recent months,

remarkable progress has been achieved on this project and we have already received the final draft report.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following extensive consultations we had with the various stakeholders involved in the tourism sector and civil society and after taking into account that our aim is to take full advantage of the tourism potential for its contribution to the socio-economic development of the island, my Regional Government has decided to approve the option of constructing a runway on a new alignment with an initial length of 2000m with possibility of future extension to 3000m as initially recommended by Aéroport de Paris (ADPi) Ltée. The estimated cost of this new runway project is Rs 1.8 Billion.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, while the necessary bidding documents and the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) are being elaborated by the consultants, I am making a provision of Rs 8M for the resettlement of the 16 families of Bangélique whose houses fall under the new runway alignment.

MODERNISING OUR PORT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are in an era of economic globalisation whereby almost all ports around the world are evolving at a rapid pace from being traditional land/sea interfaces to being providers of modern and larger port infrastructure. By the same token, we have to cope with these changing trends and we have the strong commitment and initiatives to modernise our port with the ability to accommodate larger vessels coupled with improved port infrastructure and services and therefore take advantage of our geographical position.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this endeavour much has been done: a new Port Master Plan has been prepared by the Mauritius Port Authority and the recommendations are being implemented in collaboration with my Government. As such, the dredging of the navigational channel from Port Mathurin to Oyster Bay and dredging works in Pointe Monier for the berthing of fishing vessels have all been completed. It was also recommended that an area of about 2 ha be reclaimed at Pointe L'Herbe and a safe berthing basin be constructed. Therefore, additional dredging, land reclamation and construction of rock revetment will have to be undertaken.

In addition to that, the Mauritius Port Authority which has already signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on the management and operations of the port has agreed to provide technical assistance for the construction of light berthing facilities at Pointe Monier. Two options of berthing structures are being studied and a

detailed assessment will soon be undertaken to have a precise estimate of works. Moreover, on the occasion of the signature of the MOU, 'Solitaire' a new tug was launched. The latter will be used to guide vessels entering and leaving the port channel.

However, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, there is a growing concern on the outcrop in the access channel at the entrance of Port Mathurin. Hydrographers are unanimous that the outcrop represents a potential danger for vessels navigating in this area. According to the Mauritius Ports Authority (MPA) a previous survey carried out in 1847 showed that the outcrop was lying at a depth of 9 metres. Presently, it is of 6.9 metres with a footprint of about 200 metres below sea level and as such constitutes a real threat to navigation. Since vessels traffic to Port Mathurin is also expected to increase in the future, it is therefore imperative to render navigation in the leading channel safe.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this end and in line with the Port Development Programme which aims at providing access and other handling facilities to all vessels calling at Port Mathurin Port, we are working in close collaboration with the MPA for removal of the mentioned outcrop.

As Martin Luther King Jr. said, *"We may have all come on different ships, but we are in the same boat."* Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am convinced that the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand but rather in what direction we are moving, and how we will reach our destination which is this modern port, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we are sailing. *Mon équipe et moi même sommes convaincus qu'on arrivera à bon port.*

ENERGISING THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the development of the tourism industry remains a major priority on my economic development strategy. Despite the numerous challenges faced by this sector like limited air access, expensive air tickets, high competition with other destinations, I am pleased to announce this assembly that during the period January to August of this year, the number of tourists visiting our island is 30,821 as compared to 29,002 for the same period last year. We have had an increase of about 8,2% in the number of Mauritian visitors till now and 5,6% in the number of tourists from Reunion Island and France.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this increase in tourism arrival from Mauritius is driven by the "special holiday package" and the intensive promotional campaigns undertaken by the Commission for Tourism along with the Tourism Office and Discovery Rodrigues Ltd as well as other stakeholders such as

“Association Tourisme Réunion” (ATR). This trend is expected to continue onwards.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, following discussions which I personally had with the Honorable Prime Minister and the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, I have obtained firm commitment from the government that this special holiday package has proven its merit and will be extended beyond December 2011. It is a fact that our fellow Mauritian tourists do not only come to the island as tourists but they spend heavily on local products thus contributing significantly in the development of our local handicrafts and agro-alimentary industry.

In addition, for the year 2012, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, much emphasis will be laid on the “Ile Vanille” concept. In this connection, the Commission for Tourism in collaboration with our regional partners is targeting new emerging markets in line with the national tourism marketing strategies.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a "Tourism Advisory Committee" (TAC) has been set up in line with the policy of the Ministry of Tourism to synergize our collaboration in the promotion of Rodrigues destination.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues has never been so visible before for nature lovers on the world tourism market as it is today. Another innovation in the tourism sector which will promote Rodrigues to new heights is the “Trail de Rodrigues” event which will be held on the 13th November this year.

In this context, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am doubling our financial contribution for the Rod Trail Association.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to decentralising and offering better services, an office desk of the Tourism Office will be opened at Sir Gaetan Duval Airport before the end of this year. Furthermore, to increase our visibility on the national and international market, we are coming forward with the setting up of a sub-office of the “Office du Tourisme de Rodrigues” in Mauritius which will work in close collaboration with its Mauritian counterparts.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the call from tourism operators to increase the budget has been heard. I am therefore making an initial provision of Rs 7.5M in addition to the agreed matching grant from the MTPA for intensive promotion campaigns in our most profitable tourism markets like Mauritius, France and Reunion; as well as the emerging ones like India and China.

Therefore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the first time, the total budget allocation for the promotion of tourism will be Rs 15M.

INVIGORATED AND MODERNISED AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I now turn to one of the major pillars of our economy which is the Agricultural Sector.

Indeed this sector has greatly contributed towards income and employment creation. My Regional Government still aims at strengthening and modernising the agricultural sector through the provision of an enabling environment focusing on food production and security; protection, conservation and the sustainable use of our natural resources which comprise scarce agricultural land.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Government has achieved the following in the Agricultural Sector during the current financial year:

- Finalisation of 600 agricultural permits;
- Drafting of the Agricultural Reform Bill to consolidate existing legal framework regarding agricultural development;
- Setting up of a Project Planning and Monitoring Unit (PPMU) to improve project management and facilitate processing of certificates to planters and breeders;
- 220 ha of land has been under the cultivation so far;
- Fencing of some 100 ha of agricultural land at Baie Topaze, Morico, Grand Var, Anse Enfer, Mourouk and Gravières;
- Rehabilitation of 4 kms of drains at Terre Rouge, Morricco and Tamarin and 1 km of drain at Mt Goyaves;
- Mechanisation of 380 ha of agricultural land all around Rodrigues;
- Purchase of three additional tractors for the mechanisation of agricultural land;

- Setting up of 3 ha of model farms at Camp Pintade with a view to encouraging farmers' community to adopt new practices and techniques of farming to increase food production;
- Production and distribution of some 5,000 seedlings to planters;
- Upgrading of three irrigation networks at Rivière Coco, Eau Vannée and Terre Rouge and setting up of five additional networks at Baie aux Huitres, Songes, Anse Baleine, Baie Topaze and Caverne respectively;
- Fencing and reforestation of a total of 187 ha of land at Grenade, Anse Raffin and Montagne Croupier;
- Mechanisation and fodder plantations on 20 ha of pasture land at St Gabriel;
- Production and sales of 300 piglets and 13 heifers to breeders;
- Training of 25 farmers in milk production techniques and installation of a Milk Pasteurisation Unit at St. Gabriel LPU. The RTMC is selling pasteurised milk for the first time in Rodrigues; and
- Regarding animal health, free Veterinary Services have been provided to breeders.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as I pointed out earlier in the growth model, agriculture plays a crucial role when transiting from a traditional method to a more commercialised and mechanised one.

For financial year 2012, I am making provision to the tune of Rs 37,2M for the implementation of the following measures:-

- Construction of an Agricultural House at Citronelle to provide a better working environment and enhancing the motivation of officers while providing the appropriate infrastructure for training facilities to the farmers' community;
- Setting up of additional water harvesting structures at Baladirou, Mourouk and other places to boost crop production;

- Construction of a modern slaughter house at Baie Diamant. The first phase comprising of enabling earth works on the site has been completed. Bids for the construction works are at evaluation stage and the construction works are expected to start by October this year; and

Introduction of artificial insemination in cattle to reduce the problem of inbreeding and enhance the quality of carcass.

INTEGRATED WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the water problem is obtaining a special attention. Since January 2011, I have set up a specific Commission to cater principally for the mission of increasing water production and concurrently to ensure a sustainable provision of good quality and regular water supply for equitable distribution among the population. In this respect, the Commission for Water Resources is responsible for the production and distribution of water supplies in the Northern and Central parts of the Island, whereas the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd. has jurisdiction over the Southern region only. The Commission for Water Resources operates the following assets in the Northern and Central Sections that include 30 reservoirs, 18 dams and springs, 12 chlorination plants, 11 pumping stations and 13 boreholes. Our assets are now being maintained regularly and are secured.

Major achievements have been noted in the water sector. Let me mention a few of them:-

- Commissioning and operationalisation of one 1000m³ reservoir at Creve Coeur with a view to increasing storage capacity and shortening the intervals of water distribution in the region. Some 780 families have thus benefitted from an improved water distribution;
- Upgrading of the water network with a view to easing the distribution and reducing leakages in the following villages: Pointe L'Herbe, Crève-Coeur, Bay Malgache, Banane, Oyster Bay, Vanguard, English Bay, Allée Tamarin, Terre Rouge, Malartic, Lataniers, Trois Soleils, Basin Banane, Battue Madame, Montagne Goyaves, Sources Tigomme, Thames, Trèfles, Petit Gabriel, Eau-Vannée, Camp Paul, Deux Goyaves, Port Sud Est and Eau-Clair;

- Uplifting of the public fountains at Malabar, Bigarades and Gravieres to offer a better service to our population. A fibre glass water tank has been installed at Gravieres and Camp du Roi. The latter enables 66 families to have access to potable water;
- Refurbishment of the Water Resources Offices including the electro-mechanical workshop, laboratory, store, pumping station, chlorination plant and Malabar reservoir. The Central-Sub Station compound has also been fenced;
- Desilting of reservoirs and dams at Gravieres;
- Installation of some 174 new water prises and upgrading of the water systems at Camp du Roi, Eau-Vannée, and Dans Samy.
- Extension works in the drainage of Brackish Plant at Hauteur Accacia to allow the brine from the plant to be deposited safely without harming the environment;
- Acquisition of a new Back Hoe Loader to speed up the desilting of small dams and to carry out other related works.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, besides the achievements I have mentioned, many projects initiated are still ongoing. They include the following:-

- Supply, installation and commissioning of a Control Panel at Mourouk pumping station so that water pumps could operate at the optimum safe level ;
- Upgrading of Water System at Tamarin, Dans-Limon (La Ferme), Roche Bon Dieu and Le Chou for improvement of water production and distribution;
- Installation and Commissioning of two fibre glass water tanks at Pointe Venus to enable the villagers of the surroundings to have access to potable water during dry seasons;
- Supply of flow meters and gate valves for rehabilitation of boreholes for a proper water monitoring;

- Repair, testing and commissioning of steel reservoirs at Citron Donis and Montagne Goyaves to consolidate the structures which are now extremely vulnerable during cyclones;
- Construction of two 1000m³ reservoirs at L'Union and Camp Pintade to improve water storage and distribution in those regions respectively;
- Upgrading of Petit Brulée Sub Section including fencing works, painting of reservoirs, fixing of gates and construction of a small office.
- Procurement of two new lorry water tankers for water distribution;
- Refurbishment of sixteen chlorination plants throughout the island;
- Rehabilitation of desalination plant at Songes;
- Procurement of ten fibre glass water tanks of 9m³, five spare motors and control panels, pipes and fittings; and
- Upgrading of treatment plant at Anse Raffin.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the rain water harvesting programme is being implemented. This will enable the construction of 360 units of 6m³ domestic concrete water tanks to allow households of low income group to have a rainwater harvesting system.

The improvement of water quality, supply and distribution is high in the agenda of the RRA.

The development of the water sector is an ongoing programme. We will continue with the implementation of the same strategies with emphasis of the following activities:-

- Extension and rehabilitation of the distribution network;
- Rehabilitation of reservoirs, dams and boreholes;
- Construction of new reservoirs; and
- Implementation of rain water harvesting at household level.

With these results, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am proud for having set up for the first time in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly a specific Commission dedicated to the water sector.

REFORESTATION AND PROTECTION OF ENDANGERED SPECIES

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues has already embarked on the implementation of the concept of Maurice Iles Durables. It is good to note that the promotion of biodiversity conservation has already started in Rodrigues with the implementation of the SIDPR under the following projects:

- Maintenance of nature reserves at Grande Montagne, Anse Quitor and Ile aux Cocos;
- Sensitisation campaigns on the importance of reforestation programmes; and
- Maintenance and management of existing forest areas.

As at date, the main achievements of the Forestry Services are as follows:-

- (i) Rehabilitation of 187 ha of state land at Grenade, Anse Raffin and Montagne Croupier;
- (ii) Management of 30 ha of land which were invaded by *Accacia nilotica* (*piquant loulou*) ; and
- (iii) Maintenance of 47 ha of forest land under nature reserves at Grande Montagne, Anse Quitor and Ile aux Cocos through native forest management operations.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in view of improving forests cover throughout the island, my Regional Government proposes to undertake a reafforestation programme along the southern coast of Rodrigues using endemic and native species as a means to combat soil erosion, improve water catchment of the different valleys and promote biodiversity. Through this programme we are aiming towards the reafforestation of about 200 ha of bare land every year as from 2012. In addition, the ongoing programme for the eradication of *Accacia nilotica* will be maintained.

REVITALISING THE FISHING INDUSTRY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, fisheries remain one of the key productive sectors of our economy. Our fisheries development programme contains a number of ongoing components in respect of which the following achievements have been noted:

- Since January 2011, some 297 off lagoon fishermen cards have been granted to those who have completed their training programme thus promoting outer lagoon fishing and reducing fishing pressure on the lagoon;
- Maintenance of the 16 FADs which are operational around Rodrigues;
- Five fishing vessels of 15 metres long are being constructed and will be delivered in November this year. These fishing boats funded under the ongoing IFAD/MARS Programme will be allocated to five cooperative fishing societies;
- A Value Chain Analysis has already been initiated in the fishery sector;
- We have already initiated discussions with promoters willing to invest in the fishery sector to develop public private partnership venture ;
- An “*Assise de la pêche*” was held in Rodrigues for the first time in April 2011 during which participants including more than 100 fishers joined six panels which discussed on “Fishermen in the process”, “Policy Orientation”, “Coastal, FAD and Bank Fisheries”, “Marine Conservation, Protection and Enforcement”, “Sea Food Hub and Fishing Port” and “Tourism”;
- The Fisheries Master Plan for Mauritius and Rodrigues has already been submitted to Cabinet. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly participated fully in this exercise together with the Ministry for Fisheries and Rodrigues; and
- The implementation of Voluntary Redeployment Scheme (VRS) for lagoon fishers under 50 years has been a success. To date 329 applications have been processed.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the financial year 2012 the following strategies will be implemented:-

- Provision for adequate training and support to pursue the transfer of fishing effort to other off lagoon fisheries and to other sectors of the economy;
- Some 100 fishermen will be trained in off lagoon fishing techniques by the end of this year and another 100 will be trained during next financial year; and
- Reinforcing the protection of fisheries and marine resources in the coastal water of Rodrigues;

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this effect four Fisheries Protection Officer are being promoted to the grade of Senior Fisheries Protection Officer.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are focusing on the development of aquaculture in view of its high potential to provide alternative income generating activities for fishermen and to contribute to a more sustainable use of the lagoon ecosystem.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, sea weed farming has not been left aside. Since a long time IFAD has supported the elaboration of a sea weed farming project. No progress had been observed and it was only recently that I approached the Mauritius Research Council (MRC) which is also responsible for the conduct of a national research programme on the development of sea weed industry in Mauritius and Rodrigues. A Technical committee has been set up to monitor this programme. The MRC has already initiated actions to implement a pilot sea weed farming project in Rodrigues. This institution will set up a satellite Research and Development Unit in the island with the assistance of a Research Officer to assist in the development and implementation of research programmes.

MANAGEMENT & IMPLEMENTATION OF MARINE PARKS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, We want to preserve our marine environment for our future generations. To this end, I have already presented the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Fisheries and Marine Resources – The South East Marine Protected Area (SEMPA), Regulations 2011. This was necessary as the over-exploitation of the lagoon and the continuous degradation of the marine eco

system has been a subject of concern for the Government, civil societies and the population at large.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the SEMPA project was designed to establish a model of co-management approach for the setting up and sustainable implementation of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in the southern lagoon of Rodrigues and for eventual replication of same in the Republic of Mauritius. The SEMPA boundary occupies a total area of 43 km² from Pointe Corail to Pointe Roche Noire. The aim behind including the whole southern lagoon was to better manage the resources through the development of appropriate zoning plans for the area.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the SEMPA project will yield a number of socio-economic and environmental benefits to the whole island. Within its boundaries, SEMPA hosts a variety of activities including fishing, kite surfing, diving, snorkelling and glass bottom boating. Within the conservation zone, SEMPA enables innocent passage as well as the use of vessels for the purposes of recreation and research activities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the SEMPA was officially launched on Monday 12th September 2011.

MANAGEMENT OF STATE LANDS

M. le Président, un de nos biens les plus précieux que nous devons léguer à nos petits enfants c'est notre terre. Etant donné que nos bien fonciers sont limités, nous avons le devoir de bien les gérer afin de sauvegarder les espaces pour l'agriculture, le résidentiel, commercial, industriel, les réserves naturelles entre autres. Ces derniers temps nous avons constaté qu'il y a une mauvaise planification dans l'octroi des baux parce que d'une part il y avait une Commission qui s'occupait spécifiquement des baux agricoles et une Commission pour les autres types de baux.

Malheureusement, M. le Président, depuis des décennies nous avons assisté à la perte constante de nos terres agricoles. C'est la raison pour laquelle M. le Président, dès janvier de cette année-ci, j'ai décidé qu'une seule Commission s'occuperait de toutes les terres de l'Etat.

“Gouverner c'est prévoir”, M. le Président. C'est dans cette optique que nous avons fait appel à un organisme international, le ‘UN Habitat’ pour un vrai plan d'aménagement territorial intégré (an Integrated Land Management Plan for Rodrigues).

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that is why my Regional Government has adopted new policies concerning the grant of state land leases in Rodrigues with a view to ensuring a more effective land management to meet the long term socio-economic development objectives of Rodrigues. Guidelines, policies and procedures have been re-engineered to fit the Rodriguan context. With those measures we will surely relieve the burden on the low income groups.

I am pleased to inform the house that the following policies are applicable since July this year:

- Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards residential leases, my Regional Government has adopted the same policy as those prevailing in Mauritius to grant long term leases for a period not exceeding 60 years instead of 20 years. In the same vein, the rental tariff for persons whose monthly income is less than Rs 8500 has been reviewed from Rs 450 to Rs 100 yearly.
- In addition, Mr. Chairperson Sir, a Public Relations Unit has been set up at the Cadastral Office to fast track procedures for the processing of applications, some of which are outstanding for many years. As at date all applications processed by the Cadastral survey have received planning clearance and leases will be awarded accordingly.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, many Rodriguan possessing commercial leases were being penalised by the high annual rentals ranging from Rs 6,500 to Rs 10,000. My Regional Government has changed this policy so that a more affordable rental fee of Rs 1000 is claimed for the first 10 years and 50% increase for each and every subsequent 10 year period.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, complaints have been received from old aged pensioners who are requested to submit a notarial deed for the transfer of their residential leases onto their next to kin. For the drawing of the said deed, the notary public is claiming a high fee which most of the time is unaffordable to them. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government has been sensitive to these complaints and a new policy decision was taken to do away with such practices for a transfer of a lease to a relative whose monthly family income does not exceed Rs 8,500 as in the case of the rental.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are aware that the maximum extent of 420 m² of land allocated for a residential lease is not sufficient to cater for the mode of living of the Rodriguan who has always included some backyard gardening and farming. Therefore, my Regional Government has increased the maximum

extent for residential lease from 420 m² to 600 m². This measure will also enable Rodriguans to operate home-based activities such as dressmaking, artisanal businesses, hairdressing and others, and to facilitate access to credit facilities.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government has also extended the period of reservation of land from six months to one year and the delay for submission of preliminary plans from three months to six months.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in January 2011, the regional government commissioned an audit on state land management in Rodrigues. The report enabled us have a snapshot of the situation. The findings of the audit revealed that as to date there is a backlog of some 2000 applications of residential leases which dates as far back to 2003. The main achievements during financial year 2011 are as follows:-

- Issue of 1250 letters of intent concerning the regularisation of squatters;
- Survey of 352 plots of land for approved beneficiaries under the Trust Fund Programme and the issue of 104 letters of intent ;
- Survey of an additional 450 plots of state land; and
- Handing over of 209 leases

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during financial year 2012, it is proposed to consolidate all legislations pertaining to state land management and to improve the efficiency of the Cadastral Office in its service delivery in order to cope with the existing backlog of applications for leases. In this context and in line with the recommendations of the SIDPR, it is proposed to set up a Geographical Information System Unit at the Cadastral Office to provide the appropriate tool for the effective management of state lands in Rodrigues.

SUPPORTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP & INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the development of the private sector is one of the main themes of our development strategy. I will concede that several efforts have been made in the past to promote private investment aimed at employment creation. I will also say the efforts made by each and everyone has not been wasted and there is still perseverance and renewed interest among the population to start their own enterprise. There are many success stories: one

just has to visit the fairs and see how our courageous entrepreneurs have innovated to meet the customer needs. We are quite aware that Rodrigues is short of local private capital, has a small market, and transportation problem; some have also observed the lack of entrepreneurial spirit. Despite these difficulties which are beyond our control many persons continue to strive in order to start their own enterprise. This has been expressed by the growing number of applications for lease received at Invest Rodrigues since the beginning of fiscal year 2011. To date we have already given clearance to 103 potentially viable projects.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that is why we have set up a business friendly environment. Only recently, a multi-departmental committee has been set up to analyse and approve new projects that correspond to the real needs of the population. Other measures that we have revitalized are the Freight Rebate Scheme which has benefitted both the exporters and importers in priority activities such as animal feeds. Training has been dispensed to potential entrepreneurs to enable them better face the emerging challenges of our economy. We are quite well aware that without the managerial and technical training, many enterprises would have been in the red. Thus, my Commission is providing support to implement tailor-made training programmes geared towards our local entrepreneurs through continuous capacity building programmes. Many entrepreneurs are now participating actively in several fairs for the test marketing of their products.

- In this context eleven artisans from Rodrigues participated in the Innovex Trade Fair at Mont Choisy, Mauritius;
- 110 local entrepreneurs from Rodrigues participated in the Handicraft/SME sales exhibition organised in August 2011 in Port Mathurin; and
- About 25 entrepreneurs have just participated in the “Salon de PME” fair held at Swami Vivekananada this month. It was an excellent opportunity for the local SMEs to market their produce at national level and to make a test marketing of their products.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the greatest challenge faced by our economy is how to boost up the development of a professional private sector for Rodrigues. This will no doubt help solve our major societal problems. During these few months as Chief Commissioner I have had the opportunity to work for the establishment of several projects.

I am pleased to announce a series of measures to encourage small entrepreneurs to start their projects.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, first, I am introducing a special grant scheme for small entrepreneurs. Those eligible for the scheme will be those new entrepreneurs willing to start a new production unit that can generate self-employment. The applicants must meet the required conditions to benefit from the scheme which is being worked out and the eligibility criteria will be published.

Second, I am already in consultation with the United Nation Resident Coordinator for the UN system technical support in several fields such as the elaboration of the new Tourism Master Plan and a plan for entrepreneurship development. The study will also review and evaluate initiatives under the past micro-credit programme. This plan will certainly entail some major changes in our educational and mode of living so as to prepare the future generations to face the future challenges.

Third, the development of new strategies for Private/Public Partnership (PPP) will be explored to further promote investment. Our contribution to these projects shall be the underutilised assets such as Pointe La Gueule processing plant, the boat yard, abandoned quarters, and used equipment plant and machinery as our share contribution. According to a rough estimates, our contribution shall be about Rs 35M.

Fourth, we will set up a Multi Sisciplinary Steering Committee including professionals experienced in different managerial functions to help bolster industrial development. The Committee will include other stakeholders such as the EPMU.

Fifth, the creation of a one-stop shop for entrepreneurs where all services for creation of an enterprise to be grouped under a single roof. The issue of permits and licence will no longer be a constraint.

Sixth, the administration of the freight rebate scheme will be reviewed and decentralised. Those concerned with agricultural imports and exports can then submit their applications directly to the Commission for Agriculture.

Seventh, the provision of continuous support with target scheme to boost export to Mauritius and other countries. Given that labour cost is cheaper in Rodrigues, it will be easier for such enterprises to establish themselves on our island.

Eighth, we will continue our Entrepreneurship Training Programme and organise additional technical training in different fields.

Ninth, the RRA will also recruit a team of consultants under existing programmes for the preparation of about 100 feasibility studies, which will constitute a pool of business ideas and model for youngsters and those who want to start a business. Each business model can be used by more than 20 new businesses.

We will also seek the support of relevant institutions for their support to implement our industrial development programme. I am pleased to inform the house that I have already initiated discussions with the National Productivity and Competiveness Council (NPCC) and SMEDA.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this effect I am providing an initial amount of Rs 2M.

CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF ROADS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I now turn to the Infrastructure Development Sector which is a prerequisite for economic prosperity and is the core to the success of the philosophy “*Pou ène Rodrigues fort*”.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the construction, rehabilitation and upgrading of roads are central to my Regional Government budget strategy since they not only provide employment for our people but they enable access throughout the island and contribute in boosting private investment which provides further employment opportunities.

M. le Président, la route reliant Mont Limon à Nassola figure sur la liste des projets routiers pour l’année 2011 et nous assistons actuellement à sa réalisation.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, what have we not heard concerning the construction of this road? The fact remains that the works were delayed due to lack of consensus with the villages in the process of acquisition of private lands. At a certain point in time we were accumulating so much delays in the implementation of the project, that instead of waiting for the issue to unlock, decision was taken to proceed ahead with the construction of the “Cascade Jean Louis to Reposoir” road which also appears in the 2011 budget as well as the five year programme of the Mouvement Rodriguais.

I am therefore pleased to announce that the construction of the 1.5 km road from Cascade Jean Louis to Reposoir is now a reality. We have just inaugurated “*ce petit bijou*” last week for the welfare of the inhabitants of the region and which provides an alternative access to the airport.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the financial year 2012, I am making provision of Rs 70M in addition to funding under the National Budget for the construction and upgrading of the following roads:

- Resurfacing and realignment of 3 kms of road from St Gabriel to Port Sud Est;
- Resurfacing and realignment of the road Brulé – Pointe Coton on 5.5 kms;
- Completion of Citron Donis to Anse Raffin/Tamarin road;
- Construction of the Phase 1 of the link road from Mourouk to Gravières;
- Construction of Camp Pintade road; and
- Construction of Terre Rouge to Citronelle road.

Besides, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to linking remote regions of Rodrigues to main roads, my government is emphasising on the construction of track roads throughout the island.

As at date, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in regions 1 and 2, the works have already been completed. Concerning the regions 3, 4 and 6, works are nearing completion and preliminary works are in progress in region 5.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this budget I am making provision for the construction of another 8 kms of track roads throughout the island.

CONSTRUCTION OF BUS SHELTERS

M. le Président, qui peut rester insensible à la misère des gens qui attendant le bus à la merci des intempéries? Ce gouvernement régional, conscient de sa responsabilité envers les usagers du transport public et en vue de les soulager a fait construire durant cette année financière les abri bus/aires de

stationnement dans les endroits suivants: Songes, Petite Butte, Corail Petite Butte, Montagne Malgache, Montagne Chérie, et Citron Donis.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the coming financial year, I am making provision for the construction of bus shelters at other locations throughout the island.

CONSTRUCTION OF PORT-MATHURIN MARKET

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to inform the house that the construction of the Port Mathurin market, which is according to international standards, has been completed and will be inaugurated shortly. As you are aware, this landmark project has cost Rs 85M and will provide for a more hygienic and spacious environment for both the *“maraîchers”* and the public.

IMPROVEMENT/MINOR WORKS IN VILLAGES

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, challenges still remain at villages’ levels but this Regional Government is committed to enhance and improve the standard and quality of living of our citizens.

By the end this financial year, the following works will be completed:

- Construction of green spaces at Camp Pintade, Piment, Cascade Jean Louis, Rivière Banane, Montagne du Sable, Mangue, Jardin Mamzellw, Baie Malgache and Plaine Mao;
- Construction of children gardens at Maréchal, Parc Tortue and Nassola;
- Construction of basketball pitches at Tamarin, Quatre Vents, Grand La Fouche Corail and Papayes;
- Construction of a volleyball pitch at English Bay;
- Upgrading of Ile Michel and Reposoir football grounds;
- Upgrading of the pre-primary school at Corail Petite Butte;
- Upgrading works at Anse aux Anglais will start shortly, with the construction of kiosks and revetment wall along the coastal road;

- Provision of street lighting and electricity in morcellements;
- Construction of box culvert at Champs;
- Upgrading of Women Centre at Terre Rouge; and
- Upgrading of the tourism site of Roche Bon Dieu.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the financial year 2012, I propose to allocate Rs 127M of our budget on infrastructure to improve community infrastructure and foster economic activities at local levels.

SOCIAL HOUSING AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during this financial year, the following will be accomplished with regard to social housing for the vulnerable and needy groups of our society:

- Provision of building materials under the Elderly Housing Scheme;
- Construction of 25 housing units for low to medium income groups;
- Completion of 163 self-help low cost housing units; and
- Payment of grants under the casting of slab scheme.

CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE OF GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS AND OTHER ASSETS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, everybody knows the old go-down of La Ferme which has played a vital role in agricultural development of the southern and western part of the island. I am pleased to inform the house that this old building which was left in an abandoned state has been completely renovated to further decentralise public services. Its architectural cachet has been preserved to maintain its historical heritage importance.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the same philosophy has been applied to the ex-agricultural office at Anse Quitor constructed by Father Smith (Gros Père) a pioneer in the development of the agricultural training in Rodrigues. This building has also been given a “*seconde jeunesse*” and is now providing a meeting place for the youth of the region.

ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AND CONSERVATION

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the sustainability and economic growth of our island depends on how well we use, manage and protect our environment and our natural resources.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is why wide consultations were held in Rodrigues in March and June this year concerning the Maurice Iles Durables whose objective is the creation of a model of sustainable development, particularly in the context of SIDS (Small Island Developing States). A ten year strategic plan has therefore been developed including an action plan whereby the following sectors are concerned; Development of renewable energy, Biodiversity Protection and Conservation, Waste management, Employment, Education and Equity.

M. le Président, qui ne connaît pas l'éternel problème de l'approvisionnement en gaz ménager à Rodrigues? Pourtant, Rodrigues a le potentiel de produire du gaz propre à partir de déchets ménagers. M. le Président, Rodrigues peut être l'exemple à suivre en matière d'énergie renouvelable. C'est pourquoi, M. le Président, je fais provision de Rs 3M dans ce budget pour démarrer dans une première phase 100 unités de production de biogaz. Sur le long terme, nous envisageons la mise sur pied d'une unité d'embouteillage de gaz ménager dans l'île.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have put much effort in upgrading the environment of the island through the implementation of the following activities:

- Plantation of some 1225 decorative plants in public places and roadsides at St Francois, La Ferme, Pointe Monier, Anse Quitor community centre, Pointe La Gueule and green spaces of Cascade Jean Louis, Camp Pintade and Piment Reposoir;
- Provision of endemic and decorative plants to various organisations for the greening of the different sites such as the villages of Grand la Fouche Mangues, Graviars, Anse Quitor, Plaine Mao and Roche Bon Dieu;
- Cleaning of compound, fencing works, installation of wooden picnic tables and benches as well as construction of traditional sheds;
- Glass bottle collection campaigns throughout the island;

- Sensitisation and environmental awareness campaigns in villages and schools; and
- Promotion of private nurseries to produce decorative and endemic plants for embellishment of our island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the first impression of almost all visitors coming to our island is the beauty and cleanliness. However, behind this lies the remarkable work done by the employees of Rodclean Ltd. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this company is a success story. We are proud to say that this is presently the island's largest private enterprise employing some 150 workers. I am glad to say, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that the company will soon start its fifth year of operation.

This company which is in fact shouldering the responsibility of waste management, collection and transportation services since November 2007. Its activities covers the whole island has recently extended its scope to include the embellishment of our environment and management of the green spaces.

In addition, the employees are posted throughout the island for cleaning along the roadsides and drains on a daily basis. Furthermore, the company offers bush cutting services in accordance with the contract agreement signed between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the company.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the company has recently procured a new compacting lorry to the tune of Rs 5M to increase its transport fleet for better service delivery. In order to meet the challenge of keeping Rodrigues greener, we will extend the waste segregation project throughout the island.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the other companies are also doing remarkable job. The Rodrigues Water Company Ltd. is already managing part of the water distribution network. More responsibility will be given to the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd. with a view to ensuing a more equitable and efficient distribution of our limited resources.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Rodrigues General Fishing Company Ltd. which started its operations on wrong footing has been revitalized with the appointment of a new board of directors and now, in spite of low fishing season is generating enough revenue to cover all its operating costs.

The Rodrigues Trade and Marketing Company Ltd. which is of paramount importance to market our agricultural produce is on the right track.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in order to save on management cost we are looking forward to merge Rodclean Ltd. and Rodrigues Housing Property Development Co. Ltd.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the 250 General Workers, I wish to assure this house that their employment for 2012 has been secured on a contractual basis pending the decision of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms and other relevant authorities for their employment against established posts.

EXPANDING ACCESS TO QUALITY EDUCATION

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the most important asset of a nation is its human capital. Indeed, a quality, skilled, knowledgeable, creative and innovative human capital is a prerequisite towards achieving a developed nation. As such, my Commission is maintaining its policy of intensifying human capital development and expanding access to quality education.

Pre-primary education

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, prior to 2006, the Commission for Education was investing Rs 1,8M annually in the pre-primary school sector which was meant for the per capital grant paid to 4+ age pupils. However, when I took office as Commissioner for Education I found that some 40% of 3+ pupils could not attend school due to the financial difficulties faced by the parents. Then, the Executive Council decided to double the allocation to the pre-primary schools to the tune of Rs 3,6M. It was noted with much satisfaction that such measures have brought positive results in as much as the enrolment rate at pre-primary for both 3+ and 4+ is now above the 90% target thanks to these measures. I have the pleasure to announce that for period January 2011 to date some 532 cases of 3+ pupils from needy families have been approved.

Unfortunately, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, those directly concerned with our early childhood care and education are not getting the deserving attention as far as their salaries are concerned. It is a pity to see the disparity in the salaries of these educators, our “*Ti miss*”, who are devoting so much of their time, love, efforts and care for the holistic development of these kids. After consultations with the “Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues” and the pre-primary school teachers and in order to palliate to the lack of fairness and equity towards our pre-school teachers, it has been agreed that the association be responsible for the salary of the teaching staff.

I am proposing that the grant which includes the per capita grant and the financial assistance given to needy 3+ pupils be paid as a grant to the “Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues” who will manage to pay all teachers the same salary.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to this effect, I am making a provision of Rs 4,6M.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the structure within which the pre-primary sector has been operating up to now needs to be reformed urgently. Actually there are only three pre-primary schools which fall under the Early Childhood Care Education Authority which is found in Mauritius. The remaining thirty pre-primary schools fall under the responsibility of the “Association des Ecoles Maternelles de Rodrigues” and all these schools are under the academic responsibility of two Supervisors. According to the PRB report of 2008, the supervision of pre-primary schools falls under the responsibility of the primary school inspectorate.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this connection and to better coordinate and monitor the work of these pre-primary schools in Rodrigues, I am setting up an Early Childhood Care and Education Unit under the aegis of the Commission for Education. Such unit will work in close collaboration with the Early Childhood Care Education Authority of Mauritius and implement pre-school education in line with national education policies.

The Unit will ensure that pre-primary curriculum for Rodrigues involve active parental participation, early childhood development projects, parental literacy activities, child literacy efforts and ensure that the NGOs and private sector are involved in the education programme. The Unit will also ensure that all the cultural aspects of Rodrigues are taken on board in the pre-primary education of our kids.

Primary education

Concerning the Primary Education sector, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to insist on the fact that the priority of this Regional Government is to provide our children with good values, knowledge and adequate learning skills in a conducive learning environment. Towards this, my Commission achieved the following:

- Completion of the construction of four additional rooms at Grand La Fouche Corail Government School. The school is now equipped with adequate space to accommodate teaching and learning activities, a computer lab, an open space, a kitchen and a canteen;

- Completion of the construction the Mont Charlot Community School which will be operational in January 2012; and
- Tiling works have been carried out in all government primary schools.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is worth putting on record the significant increase in the CPE pass rate attained in 2010. From 49.8 % in 2007 to 61.7% in 2010 with an increase of 26%, we have gone beyond our expected targets. Besides all efforts put in by the Commission for Education, the school staff and inspectorate are commended for their commitments to achieve such remarkable results.

My Commission recognises the importance of the link between schools and parents. I am greatly honored to announce, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, that we have entered into a new collaboration with the Roman Catholic Education Authority and Centre Carrefour since the month of May with a view to consolidating the existing network to better provide working conditions to 27 “Agents d’Education” who have offered their services in all primary schools.

M. le Président, s’il y a un souci majeur auquel bon nombres de familles ont à faire face, surtout celles au bas de l’échelle à chaque fin d’année, c’est l’achat de matériels scolaires de leurs enfants pour l’année suivante.

Toutefois, ceux qui travaillent et perçoivent un 13^{eme} mois de salaire n’ont pas cette difficulté.

Malheureusement, il y a ceux qui arrivent difficilement à le faire parce qu’ils sont soit sans emploi ou perçoivent un revenu insuffisant pour faire face au coût de la vie.

M. le Président, en signe de solidarité sociale envers les plus démunis, j’ai décidé d’offrir à tous nouveaux admis en pré-primaire, primaire et secondaire dont les parents on un revenu mensuel inférieur à Rs 8500, un cartable et une paire de chaussure pour l’année 2012.

Cette mesure touchera la majorité des familles rodriguaises de part le fait qu’elle tombe dans la fourchette de revenue mentionnés précédemment.

For the next financial year, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a sum of Rs 20M is allocated for the construction of additional classrooms at Terre Rouge

Government School as well as for the construction of four classrooms and a computer laboratory at Marc Etienne Roche Bon Dieu Government School.

Secondary education

As regards, secondary education, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government believes that our youngsters must be equipped with all the prerequisites to compete in the challenging environment. In this respect, emphasis is laid on the development and upgrading of infrastructure. I have the pleasure to announce this Assembly that the construction of Terre Rouge College will be completed in November this year. The project will help to provide space to accommodate the increasing number of students and to decrease the pupil to teacher ratio in view of improving the quality of education through better individual attention to students. Moreover, it will allow us to decentralise secondary schools in Rodrigues and help to address the problem of lateness of students and staff.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am therefore providing the sum of Rs 17M for the construction of the second phase of Terre Rouge College which will be implemented in 2012 to ensure that there is enough space to accommodate students in 2013.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Grande Montagne College has been extended with a new administration block and specialist rooms to enable the school to have adequate space to conduct 21st century science classes and to provide better school environment conducive to the teaching and learning process.

So far, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, some elements of the History and Geography of Rodrigues have been incorporated in the Social Studies Curriculum. However, most of the contents are not appropriate for Rodrigues given our specificity and therefore as from last year, a first booklet on the History and Geography of Rodrigues was prepared so that students get more acquainted to the history and culture of their country. Moreover, a second booklet has been published in July this year and is already being used in secondary schools. Works have already started for a third booklet to be used at Form III level.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, it is a fact that the Free Book Loan Scheme has greatly helped to alleviate the financial hardships of parents. In this same context, my Regional Government will continue to honour its commitment to purchase textbooks for all students of secondary schools of Rodrigues.

INTENSIFYING TRAINING AND SKILLS PROGRAMMES

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have the pleasure to announce that in order to contribute towards the socioeconomic development of Rodrigues my Regional Government is pursuing its actions to enhance knowledge through up-skilling and re-skilling. Furthermore, with a view to promoting an ICT culture, 14 students have completed a three-year training programme leading to Diploma in Software Engineering and were graduated in April this year.

I have to point out that it is for the first time in Rodrigues that a (Top Up) Degree in Computing and Information Systems Programme has been launched by the University of Technology, Mauritius.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in August this year, my Commission signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mauritius Institute of Education whose aim is to set up an Antenna of the MIE in Rodrigues to facilitate more interactions between students in Rodrigues and resource persons in Mauritius.

With regard to fiscal year 2012, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am making provision for the delivery of a Diploma course in Human Resource Management for Executive Cadres which will be sponsored and run on a part time mode in Rodrigues.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a batch of 12 pre-primary teachers is eligible to follow the Pre-primary Teacher's Certificate with the Mauritius Institute of Education (MIE). I have the pleasure to announce that provision is being made to run the Proficiency course for a batch of 11 newly recruited pre-primary teachers given that the pupil's population is increasing and there are pre-primary school teachers who will retire soon.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as enunciated on several occasions, my Commission has as priority to improve opportunities for the promotion of higher studies and make tertiary education accessible to all and every Rodriguan student. In this context, I am most honoured to announce that the Regional Assembly in collaboration with the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology is setting up a "Campus Universitaire" at Montagne Malgache. This will enhance skills in various priority fields of studies in line with market requirements. With the opening of Terre Rouge College and more space to be made available at Marechal College, the building of the ex-Citron Donis Form VI College will be released to temporarily host the "Campus Universitaire".

In the financial year 2012, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Commission will provide support for training delivered by SMEDA and MITD. The financial support is meant for training, tuition and exams fees.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am therefore allocating the sum of Rs 2M to enhance the productivity and skills of school leavers, youths and workers.

LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR A SOLID ART & CULTURE INDUSTRY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, driven by the overarching goal of developing the cultural talent of our people coupled with the preservation of the richness of our culture and our firm commitment to promote arts, we have organised amongst other events the “*Meyer performans musical en solo*” competition, in the context of the Music Day and the first “World day for cultural Diversity” in May 2011.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I have the pleasure to announce that the Notre Dames de Lourdes R.C.A. School and the Mont Lubin College participated in the Final National Slam competition held in Mauritius. The Individual National slam winner, Stellio PIERRE LOUIS represented the Republic of Mauritius in the 5th World Cup for Slam in Paris.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I firmly believe that it is our artists who create our cultural and societal identity. It is in that spirit that support is provided to our artists who are contributing towards the development and promotion of our arts industry; financial and logistic assistance was provided to the traditional groups and artists. Moreover, financial assistance was also provided to thirteen artists through the Artist Assistance Scheme for projects in CD and DVD production and Arts and Sculpture exhibition.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in line with our initiative of protecting our intangible cultural heritage including oral history, language (creole rodriguais) and Rodriguan cuisine amongst others, a committee has been set up to look into their research and preservation.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am pleased to announce that the “Séga tambour of Rodrigues” has been inscribed on the list of projects to be submitted to UNESCO in 2012.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the next financial year, support will be provided to our artists to further develop cultural initiatives and talents. Henceforth, training in traditional dance will be maintained and a new

programme of training session will be worked out to cater for more participation of youth in different villages. In addition to that, a branch of the “Conservatoire de musique Francois Mitterand” will be set up in Rodrigues.

TOWARDS A MODEL HEALTH SECTOR

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I now come to the health sector. In line with its mission of providing high quality and timely health services, much emphasis has been laid on the upgrading and renovation of existing infrastructure:

- A new Paediatric Ward comprising a gastro enteritis bay with an isolation corner and a mother’s corner and female wards including gynaecology, surgery and orthopaedics have been set up at the first floor of the new maternity building since February this year;
- With a view to facilitating the transfer of patients requiring surgery and X Ray services from one ward to another, the works for the covering of alleys will be completed shortly;
- A new linen section comprising two industrial washing machines and one industrial dryer is operational since March of this year;
- Renovation and maintenance works are ongoing to ensure a conducive environment for both patients and staff at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital, the two Area Health Centres and Community Health Centres; and
- Necessary arrangements are being made to transfer the Intensive Care Unit to the new maternity building with a view to providing a better intensive care for patients.

Again, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government is innovating by bringing Diabetic Retinopathy Screening to Rodrigues so as to enable the early screening of diabetic patients and thus preventing eye complication.

Moreover, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with a view to offering better curative services and delivering high quality medical services, the following activities amongst others will be completed during this financial year:

- In order to ensure that patients are provided with high quality care and treatment, an amount of Rs 20M will be spent for the procurement of medicines and medical drugs. Moreover, an amount of about Rs 6M will be disbursed for the transfer of patients to

Mauritius and abroad so as to ensure that they received the desired treatment;

- Contracts have been awarded for the procurement of one Faradic Muscles Stimulator with four electrodes, one Phototherapy Unit, one Tunnel Phototherapy and six Ward Dressing Trolleys amongst others; and
- Meanwhile, several equipments have been received from the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life such as 3 units cardiotocography machines, 2 units Foetal Health Detector, 4 units Infusion Pump, 1 unit Portable Pulse Oxymeter, 2 units Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve Stimulator and 2 units Multi Parameter Monitor.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, much emphasis has also been laid on the development of the Health personnel so as to ensure that they acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high quality services.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, a new policy has been adopted regarding the transfer of patients to Mauritius. In addition to existing practice it has been decided that all patients suffering from cancer who are referred to Mauritius for treatment be accompanied by a relative so as to provide greater psychological support to them.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as you are all aware, in medicine prevention is better than cure. In this context, we are concentrating much effort on prevention and sensitisation campaigns through the organisation of activities to mark major World Health Days.

In that respect, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we have gone a step further by setting up a Multi-sectoral Health Promotion Committee comprising various stakeholders to look into the promotion of Health activities geared towards the welfare of the population.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the next financial year, we will maintain our strong political commitment of providing high quality health services to the population; with emphasis on further development and improvement of the Health Services with a view, as stated in the SIDPR report of “*transforming our health care sector into a model in the region and elsewhere*”:

- (i) First, we are proceeding with the extension and upgrading of La Ferme Area Health Centre;
- (ii) Second, I am providing Rs 6M for the extension of Haemodialysis Unit and the upgrading of Community Health Centres;
- (iii) Third, for the setting up of a SAMU Unit, I am providing Rs 2M;
- (iv) Fourth, I am providing funds for the renovation and maintenance of existing wards at Queen Elizabeth Hospital;
- (v) Fifth, so as to create awareness among the population on the importance of physical activities and at the same time ensuring a healthy population, health tracks will be set up around the island;
- (vi) Sixth, information, education and sensitisation programmes and organisation of activities to mark World Health Events will be maintained and consolidated with a view to reducing mortality, morbidity and disability. In the same vein, regular screening for NCDs, breast cancer and cancer of cervix will be maintained.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Grant-in-aid will be provided to the Rodrigues Diabetics Watch, the Rodrigues Blood Donors Association and the Cancer Association, so as to support and encourage these Non Governmental Organisations' actions to promote health activities. Moreover, the allowance of the "Agents de Santé" who are providing assistance to the Commission will be raised.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the next financial period the training and development of human resources namely in Customer Care and Neonatal ICU Training for Nurses and Midwives, will remain high on our agenda.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this budget I am providing a total amount of Rs 30.5M to the Commission for Health to undertake these health related activities.

FIRE SERVICES

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to step up our efforts of providing better high quality and efficient fire services to the population, I am providing Rs 1M for the setting up of a new Fire Sub Station at Mont Plaisir.

PRISON AND REFORM INSTITUTIONS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, our prison facilities was built in the 1960's and no provision was made to segregate prisoners on remand from convicted detainees. With a view to correct this situation, I am making provision of an amount of Rs 0.5M to start necessary preliminary works for the upgrading and extension of our prison.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the Probation Services will maintain their activities to rehabilitate and protect juvenile offenders through training and other activities. In this context, I am therefore providing an amount of Rs 1.9M for the setting up of a home to accommodate juvenile delinquents.

SOCIAL SECURITY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, let me now turn to the social security sector.

In line with our vision of providing Social Security services to the vulnerable and most needy of our society, our budgetary allocation in social security has allowed us, amongst others, to perform the following activities:

- The celebration of anniversaries of two centenarians;
- The launching of anti-influenza vaccination campaign for elderly in Rodrigues in April this year;
- The launching of a sensitization campaign in August 2011 with a view to sensitising and informing the public about the eligibility criteria to benefit from social aids;
- An amount of Rs 49.5M has been spent on Social Aid benefits;
- An amount of Rs 5.7M was disbursed for the payment of fees for SC and HSC examinations; and
- Home visits and medical examinations were provided to 588 beneficiaries.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, during the next financial year, I am providing a sum of Rs 16.3M to carry out the following projects with a view to providing continuous assistance to the vulnerable segments of the population:

- First of all, toilet blocks will be constructed for needy families with a view to improve their sanitary condition.
- Our second measure relates to housing. I am providing funds to implement the social housing scheme which will be launched to provide about 100 decent dwellings to vulnerable groups of the population.

TOWARDS A MORE SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, for the next financial period significant amount of resources will be mobilised towards programmes tailored to meet women's and children's needs and towards the promotion of family welfare including the operation of the shelter for victims of abuse/domestic violence at Baladirou.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Government is convinced that the success of family welfare depends on the extent to which women are given complete freedom with their lives and this can only be achieved via the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. This is why we have laid much emphasis on women empowerment through the delivery of various training courses in Basketry, Home Economics, Embroidery, Crochet, Dressmaking and Aerobic and the organization of various workshops on themes relating to "Women as Agents de Transformation", "Les défis de la Femme Rodriguaise" and Women, Education, Science and Technology. Similarly, in line with our objective of strengthening and extending activities to help women "*deboute lor zotte dé lipié*" we have set-up a Credit Union for women.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as announced in the Government Programme 2010-2015, Government will continue to modernise the infrastructure in Rodrigues and ensure further diversification of economic activities in connecting Rodrigues to Mauritius via the Fibre Optic Cable.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in the same context, my Regional Government adheres to the concept of "*Democratisation of ICT in Rodrigues*" as well as FR safety. Major stakeholders and NGOs are unanimous that means and ways have to be devised to develop the ICT sector as it has the potential to curb the problem of unemployment in Rodrigues.

The National Policy of Free Internet Access is also being extended to Rodrigues. A first WIFI zone at Marechal Youth Advisory Bureau will be operational before the end of this year followed by 15 others with an internet speed up to 14 Gigabytes.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the implementation of this project will be facilitated with the recruitment of a Head, Communication & Information Technology.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, allow me to reassure the population of Rodrigues that Port Mathurin will remain the town of Rodrigues. Any subsequent changes to its status will rest with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly. This decision has already been communicated to one and all.

In the course of this financial year, much has been done to upgrade the infrastructure of the existing and newly built community centres. The construction of the four community centres namely at Mt Charlot, Grand Var, Grand Bay and Riviere Coco is nearing completion and will be inaugurated this year.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in our endeavour to empower the villagers and strengthen social ties amongst community members in view to fighting all social illnesses, Rs 10,000 has been granted to each village committee. This will relieve the burden of electricity charges and other maintenance works.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, several big villages have long been neglected for example, Point Monier, Pointe L'Herbe and Mont Lubin. In this respect, government buildings have been donated to the village communities of these localities respectively for their community centres.

Besides, I am hereby making provision for the construction of additional Community Centres at Baie Malgache, Montagne Tonnerre, Cité Patate, Parc Tortue, Marechal/Citron and Petit Gabriel/Pavé la Bonté.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, in this connection, I am providing an amount of Rs 10M to that effect.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE YOUTH

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Franklin D. Roosevelt stated that: "We cannot always build the future of our youths, but we can build our youths for the

future”. We have a relatively young population. It is a fact that our youth face several difficulties and sometimes are skeptical about their future. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly is striving to integrate our youth in economic and social life. Mr. Chairperson, Sir, emphasis was put on the development and discovering of talents among our youth as well as the development of an entrepreneurial culture. My Government firmly believes in the capacity of our youths. We will continue to listen and be responsive to their aspirations so that they become actively involved in the socio economic and cultural development of the island.

In order to promote their development and empowerment, my Regional Government has put in place a plethora of measures. They include:

- Provision of credit schemes;
- Provision of training for potential entrepreneurs;
- Setting up of marketing agencies for fishery products and agricultural products; and
- Mentoring programme.

However, it is considered that a special attention be given to the youth who have decided to start a small micro project. In fact, the potential for the growth of the sector is very important being given that Rodrigues imports a variety of its products from abroad. Just as the CONFES created “Le Fonds d’Insertion des Jeunes” (FIJ) in 1994, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly will embark on a similar programme.

To this effect, Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I am making a provision of Rs 12.5M to kick start the project to integrate our youth deeply in socio-economic activities thereby reducing the rate of unemployment.

PROMOTION OF SPORTS

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, Rodrigues has a great potential of talented athletes and is undoubtedly the “pépinière” of the Republic in the field of sports. Many athletes have honoured the island during the course of this financial year both at national and international level.

Rodrigues a été pour la première fois de son histoire, M. le Président, sacrée Champion du Monde pour deux années consécutives en Kick Boxing grâce à notre compatriote James Agathe, que j’ai l’honneur de féliciter encore

une fois. Facson Perrine, âgé de 18 ans seulement, a suivi la voie tracée par James Agathe et a également décroché son titre de champion du monde.

De ce fait, une somme de Rs 3M est allouée dans ce présent budget pour la construction d'un centre de boxe.

M. le Président, ces résultats exceptionnels ne sont pas le fruit du hasard. Il est aussi attribué à nos athlètes féminines. Les performances de Miss Joyce Milazar et Miss Anne Jelina Bégué au Championnat d'Afrique de Lutte et Championnat de Boxe Française Savate respectivement sont venues confirmer notre vision politique en matière de sports.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, the participation of our athletes in the 8th Indian Ocean Island Games 2011 in Seychelles was outstanding with an encouraging performance of 3 gold medals, 11 silver medals and 3 bronze medals.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to seize this opportunity to thank all those who took part in the different sports competitions organised and to congratulate the medal winners who have made the Mauritian nation as a whole and the Rodriguan people in particular proud.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, to give recognition to those who are making sacrifice, the reward scheme will be revised as follows:

- International gold medals: Rs 50,000;
- International silver medals: Rs 35,000;
- International bronze medals: Rs 20,000.

For the participation in national and regional events, the scheme will be reviewed accordingly.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, my Regional Government will continue to put much effort in its mission of providing facilities and expertise to mould high calibre and competitive athletes to maintain high-performance in sports.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, this is why during the next financial year, I am providing a sum of Rs 15M for the renovation of Camp du Roi synthetic track.

BUDGET OUT-TURN AND OUTLAY

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I shall now report progress in the implementation of the budget for the current financial year. A total amount of Rs 1.624 Billions was budgeted to meet the operating expenses of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for 2011 of which contribution from Central Government was Rs 1.604 Billions and estimated revenue was Rs 20M.

The revised operating expenditure for the current financial year is estimated to reach Rs 1.345 Billions. The rise in expenditure results mainly from the increase in Social Aid, National Pension and salary compensation 2011.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, as regards the Acquisition of Physical and Non-physical Assets, a total amount of Rs 360M was initially approved for capital projects for financial year 2011 and it is expected that the whole allocation will be spent by the 31st December 2011.

I also wish to inform the House that in the context of development projects in Rodrigues, an additional amount of Rs 10M has been provided from the contingencies and reserves for spending beyond our normal budget. This additional funding is being used for the following projects in villages:-

- Green Space at Mangues
- Children Garden at Marechal
- Children Garden and Kiosk at Parc Tortue
- Green Space at Jardin Mamzelle
- Green Space at Baie Malgache
- Covering of Drain at Allee Tamarin
- Volley Pitch at English Bay
- Children's Corner at Nassola

Our revised Capital Expenditure for development projects is estimated at Rs 370M.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I will now give a summary of the budget for the coming period running from January to December 2012. In line with the principle of good Governance, my office will ensure sound public sector financial management, with emphasis on accountability at all levels.

The Operating Expenses for financial year 2012 will reach Rs 1.310 Billions with compensation of Employees - Rs 688M, Other Goods and Services - Rs 191M, and Grants and Subsidies - Rs 12M, Social Benefits – Rs 340M and Others - Rs 79M.

The revised estimates of Revenue for the current financial year is expected to reach Rs 20.9M and the forecast revenue for the next financial year will be Rs 21M.

The Estimates for the acquisition of Physical and Non-physical Assets for the next financial year is Rs 360M. This figure is broken as follows:-

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| • Chief Commissioner's Office | Rs 67.8M |
| • Deputy Chief Commissioner's Office | Rs 10M |
| • Commissioner for Public Infrastructure and Environment | Rs 137.5M |
| • Commission for Youth and Sports | Rs 44.5M |
| • Commission for Health | Rs 31.5M |
| • Commission for Agriculture | Rs 39.5M |
| • Commissioner for Water Resources | Rs 29.2M |

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, we are completing our present mandate at a time when the global financial crisis is more severe than anyone could have anticipated. Therefore, the road ahead will not be easy. We will have to manage with uncertainties and there will be as many problems as there would be solutions. Mahatma Gandhi said and I quote, *“Democracy is the art and science of mobilizing the entire physical, economic and spiritual resources of various sections of the people in the service of the common good of all.”* This is precisely what we will have to do. With strong hearts, enlightened minds and willing hands, we will have to overcome all odds and remove all obstacles to create ‘enn Rodrigues for.’

M. le Président, permettez moi d'exprimer ma gratitude envers toute mon équipe de la majorité et à toute la population Rodriguaise pour m'avoir donné l'opportunité tant que 4^{ème} Chef Commissaire de notre Ile Rodrigues autonome de servir mon pays durant ces neuf premiers mois de 2011. Cela n'a pas été facile je l'admets mais avec un travail d'équipe, le soutien et conseils de tout un chacun ainsi qu'avec la relation cordiale rétablie entre Port Louis et Port Mathurin, je suis confiant du résultat. Rodrigues deviendra plus grand et plus fort.

Je tiens aussi à exprimer ma reconnaissance à mon Leader le Ministre de La Pêche et de Rodrigues, l'Honorable Louis Joseph Von-Mally, G.O.S.K, au Président du Mouvement Rodriguais et Private Parliamentary Secretary l'Honorable Christian Leopold, mon Adjointe, Mme Clair-Brault, mes collègues Commissaires, les collègues de l'Assemblée Régionale, les Conseillers de l'Assemblée Régionale et Nationale, le Chef de l'Administration de Rodrigues, les Chefs de Cabinets et personnels des différentes Commissions de l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues, tous ceux et celles qui ont cru en moi et m'ont aidé à diriger mon pays vers le chemin d'un décollage économique vers la modernisation d'une Rodrigues soutenable et moderne.

Je tiens aussi à remercier spécialement mon épouse, mes enfants, mes parents et mes mandants pour leur soutien indéfectible.

Je vais faillir à ma tâche et à mon devoir si je ne remercie pas ici au nom de la population de Rodrigues et en mon nom personnel et celui de mon épouse, notre Premier Ministre l'Honorable Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam, G.C.S.K., F.R.C.P pour son soutien indéfectible à Rodrigues et aussi d'avoir accordé des postes de responsabilités nationales à deux fils du sol; Louis Joseph Von-Mally, G.O.S.K. et Christian Léopold, Ministre et P.P.S. respectivement, pour la première fois dans les annales politiques de la République. Il est bon de noter que c'est le Mouvement Rodriguais qui marque l'histoire nationale et locale d'une pierre blanche avec ces deux nominations. J'en profite aussi pour remercier Le Deputy Prime Minister, l'Honorable Dr. Rashid Beebeejaun, G.C.S.K. et le vice Premier Ministre et Ministre des Finances et du Développement Economique, l'Honorable Charles Gaetan Xavier Luc Duval, G.C.S.K. et ainsi que les différents Ministres qui soutiennent Rodrigues et son peuple.

Je tiens enfin à remercier nos partenaires locaux, nationaux et internationaux qui d'une façon ou d'une autre nous ont aidé à améliorer la qualité de la vie de nos compatriotes. Je pense ici à l'Union Européenne, le PNUD, le FIDA, le GEF-SGP, le TRUST FUND, la NEF, le FAO, entre autres

ainsi que les compagnies privées qui soutiennent le développement socio-économique de la population rodriguaise dans son ensemble.

M le Président, ce présent Gouvernement Régional du Mouvement Rodriguais a pour mission de travailler pour la stabilité, l'harmonie sociale, le développement économique et redonner a chaque Rodriguais le droit légitime d'avoir un rêve et de pouvoir rêver en toute quiétude. Je terminerai mon discours par une citation d'un grand penseur, Napoléon Hill je cite: '*do not wait; the time will never be 'just right'. Start where you stand and work with whatever tools you may have at your command*'" and better tools will be found as you go along.

Mr. Chairperson, Sir, with these words I commend the budget to the House.

Thank you.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

(Applause)

The Deputy Chief Commissioner: Mr. Chairperson, Sir, I move that the debate be now adjourned.

Mr. F. A. Grandcourt rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Sir, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Monday 26th September 2011 at 10.30 hours.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

At 17.15 hours, the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Monday 26th September 2011 at 10.30 hours.