

/UNREVISED/

No. 01 of 2022

RODRIGUES

FIFTH REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

PARLIAMENTARY

DEBATES

(HANSARD)

(UNREVISED)

SATURDAY 05 MARCH 2022

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RODRIGUES

Fifth Regional Assembly

Debate No. 01 of 2022

Sitting of Saturday 05 March 2022

The Assembly met at Port Mathurin Quay, Port Mathurin, at 3 p.m.

The National Anthem was played

(Mr Chairperson in the Chair)

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The Clerk:

Your Excellency, Hon. Deputy Prime Minister

Hon. Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Private Parliamentary Secretary

Hon. Member of the National Assembly

Elected Members of the Regional Assembly

All Protocols observed

Distinguished guests, Ladies & Gentleman, may I invite you to kindly remain standing for the National Anthem, please.

The National Anthem is played.

You may, please be seated.

Proclamation of the President of the Republic fixing the place, date and time of this sitting.

Respected Members, today's sitting is being held following the Proclamation No. 13 of 2022 under the hand and Seal of His Excellency Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, Grand Officer of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean, President of the Republic of Mauritius. I shall in compliance with Standing Order 3 of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, read all the Proclamation.

**TO PROCLAIM THE OPENING OF THE FIRST SESSION OF THE FIFTH
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR PRITHVIRAJ SING
ROOPUN, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

Proclamation No. 13 of 2022

**FIX THE PLACE, DATE AND TIME AT WHICH THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
SHALL MEET FOR THE PURPOSE
OF SECTIONS 12, 13, AND 14 OF THE
RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY ACT**

PRITHVIRAJ SING ROOPUN

President of the Republic of Mauritius

PRITHVIRAJ SING
ROOPUN

- By His Excellency, Mr PRITHVIRAJ SING
ROOPUN, *Grand Commander of the
Order of the Star and Key of the Indian
Ocean, President of the Republic of
Mauritius*

&c., &c., &c.

WHEREAS by section 71A of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, it is enacted that the President may, by Proclamation, fix the place, date and time at which the Rodrigues Regional Assembly shall meet for the purpose of sections 12, 13 and 14 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act.

NOW THEREFORE, I do hereby proclaim that the meeting to administer the oaths to the Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, and the election of and the administering of oaths to, the Chairperson, the Deputy Chairperson, the Chief Commissioner and the Deputy Chief Commissioner, shall take place at Port Mathurin Quay at Port Mathurin on Saturday 5 March 2022 at 3 p.m.

Given at State House, Le Réduit, this 3rd day of March two thousand and twenty-two.

**ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF ALLEGIANCE TO OR AFFIRMATION OR
DECLARATION BY MEMBERS**

Respected Members, Standing Order 4 of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly requires that an Oath of Allegiance, Affirmation or Declaration shall be subscribed or made, as the case may be prior to any Member taking part in the proceedings of the House.

We shall therefore proceed with item No. 2 of the Order Paper, which is the administration of Oath to Members.

I will now invite the newly elected Members in alphabetical order to make and subscribe before the Regional Assembly the Oath of Allegiance to, Affirmation or Declaration prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and sign the Roll of Membership.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO MEMBERS

The following Respected Members made and subscribed before the Assembly, the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and signed the Roll of Membership -

Respected Member, Henri Agathe

Respected Member, Marie Christiane Agathe

Respected Member, Marie Ange Ludmie Allas

Respected Member, Louis Daniel Baptiste

Respected Member, Rose Marie Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis, CSK

Respected Member, Franceau Aubret Grandcourt

Respected Member, Nicolson Lisette

Respected Member, Louis Ange Perrine

Respected Member, Marie Norja Raffaut

Respected Member, Jean Rex Ramdally

Respected Member, Joseph Varok Ravina

Respected Member, Johnson Roussety, GOSK

Respected Member, Karine Roussety

Respected Member, Jean Paul Speville

Respected Member, Justar Tolbize

Respected Member, Jean Nicolas Volbert also known as Cola

Respected Member, Jean Alain Wong So

(Applause)

The Clerk: Respected Members, in accordance with the provisions of section 13 of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, I invite Mr Joseph Varok Ravina, the Local Region Member having scored the highest percentage of votes to take the Chair and to proceed with the elections of the Chairperson and the Deputy Chairperson of the Regional Assembly.

The First Local Region Member of Marechal (Mr Joseph Varok Ravina) *(being the member having recorded the highest percentage of votes at the 27 February last election)*
in the Chair

(The Mace is brought into the House by the Serjeant-at-Arms and is laid near the Table)

CHAIRPERSON – ELECTION

Mr J. V. Ravina: In accordance with the provisions of the Standing Orders and Rules of the Regional Assembly, the Assembly will now proceed with the election of a Chairperson and a Deputy Chairperson.

I will therefore, invite two Members to move and to second the election of a Member present in this Assembly to be nominated to the office of Chairperson and to take the Chair of the House as such.

The First Local Region Member of Port Mathurin (Mr Johnson Roussety): Mr Chairperson, Sir, I move that Mr Joseph Christian Leopold be nominated as Chairperson.

The First Island Region Member (Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt) rose and seconded.

Mr J. V. Ravina: Is there any other proposal? There being no other proposal, I declare Mr Joseph Christian Leopold elected as Chairperson of the Regional Assembly.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON – ELECTION

Mr J. V. Ravina: I will therefore, invite two Members to move and to second the election of a Member present in this Assembly to be nominated to the office of Deputy Chairperson of the House as such.

The First Island Region Member (Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt): Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that Mr Justar Tolbize, be elected Deputy Chairperson of the Regional Assembly.

Mr Johnson Roussety rose and seconded.

Mr J. V. Ravina: Is there any other proposal? There being no other proposal, I declare Mr Justar Tolbize, elected as Deputy Chairperson of the Regional Assembly.

(The House having called Respected Member Mr Joseph Christian Leopold, to the Chair, he proceeds to the upper step of the Chair)

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ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO CHAIRPERSON

*Mr J. C. Leopold, then made and subscribed before the Assembly
the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly
Act and signed the Roll of Membership.*

Mr Chairperson *(Standing on the upper step):*

Respectful Members, I am extremely honoured by the trust and confidence that the House has placed in me as Chairperson. I therefore, submit myself to the will of the House. I am extremely conscious of the task that lies ahead of me as Chairperson. I would like from the very outset to assure all Respected Members that I will be guided by a true spirit of fairness, respect and impartiality while conducting the business of the House. I will stand up to all the challenges with renewed vigour and confidence, to the best of my ability, without fear or favour, such that the best interests of the Assembly prevail at all times. I am sure that with the help of all Members, I will succeed to embrace the House with a sense of responsibility, dignity and friendship amongst one and all.

Once again, I would like to reiterate my heartfelt thanks to the House for the trust placed in me.

Thank you.

(Applause)

(Mr Chairperson then takes the Chair)

*(The Mace which is, up to that time, near the Table, is placed upon the Table by the
Serjeant-at Arms)*

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON

*Mr Justar Tolbize, then made and subscribed before the Assembly
the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly
Act and signed the Roll of Membership.*

Mr Deputy Chairperson *(Standing on the upper step):*

Respected Members, I am greatly honoured for the trust and confidence you have placed in me to perform the duties of Deputy Chairperson. I am fully aware of the responsibilities that are expected from me and I solemnly promise to do the best of my ability

and shall always provide my undivided support to Mr Chairperson. I wish that team spirit prevails for the smooth running of the business of the House. I again, thank the House for the trust placed in me. Thank you.

(Applause)

CHIEF COMMISSIONER – ELECTION

Mr Chairperson: I will invite a Member of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to propose and another member to second, in turn, a nomination to the office of Chief Commissioner. Is there any proposal?

The First Island Region Member (Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt): I move that the First Local Region Member of Port Mathurin, Mr Johnson Roussety, GOSK, be elected to the Office of Chief Commissioner.

The First Local Region Member of La Ferme (Mr Jean Nicolas Volbert) rose and seconded.

Mr Chairperson: Is there any other proposals? There being no other proposal, I declare Mr Johnson Roussety, GOSK, elected to the office of Chief Commissioner.

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO CHIEF COMMISSIONER

Mr Johnson Roussety, GOSK, then made and subscribed before the Assembly the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and signed the Roll of Membership.

The Chief Commissioner *(Standing on the upper step):*

Mr Chairperson, Sir,

Your Excellency, Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, President of the Republic

Hon. Steven Obeegadoo, Deputy Prime Minister

Hon. Xavier Luc Duval, Leader of the Opposition

Members of the National Assembly

The Acting Island Chief Executive

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

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Allow me first and foremost, Mr Chairperson, Sir, to congratulate you on your first most deserving election as the Chairperson of this august Assembly of the people of Rodrigues. I also extend my congratulations to all returned members of this Fifth Regional Assembly as well as to the newly elected Deputy Chairperson.

A special word of congratulation to the newly elected members who are making their first entry in this House. Heartfelt congratulations to the four newly elected women members, two of whom are on our side of this House. Welcome!

Since the 27 February, this year, the people of Rodrigues have decided to change its leaders and have adopted a new team to head the political affairs of Rodrigues.

This is the third regional government that I am about to head. The two previous ones were respectively formed on 04 August and 16 December 2006. My family and myself have been through difficult times but the call of duty of 2022 could not be unheard. I have been unduly arrested, wrongly convicted to jail in the first instance, and rightfully been vindicated on appeal in the Supreme Court. I wish here to thank all my friends and relatives who have been through all this ordeal with me and for their fidelity.

“Everything has a price, but democracy has a higher price.” This is what the Late Sir Anerood Jugnauth said in this House during his speech on 16 December 2006 for the swearing-in of Members following the regional elections of 2006. I wish to pay tribute to him today. As Chief Commissioner I will miss him and his advice, his recounts of political anecdotes and conversations a lot.

I wish to reassure one and all that all Commissioners will work in the best interest of all Rodriguans. Commitment, good governance, transparency, public participation, and ethics will remain the guiding principles among all Members of my Executive Council. I also wish to reassure government in Mauritius especially the Hon. Prime Minister that we wish to develop good working relationships with Central Government and other authorities in Mauritius. I seize this opportunity to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister for courageously causing the planting of our national flag on the beach in the Chagos recently!

With your permission, Mr Chairperson, Sir, I will briefly outline my government’s priorities. First of all, the ruling ‘Alliance Liberation’ composed on one side of the FPR and PMSD Rodrigues and on the other, of the UPR, MIR and MMR, is guided by the sustainable development approach whereby all great potentials can be used for economic progress and will

be tapped through innovative and creative skills. We want more productivity, more creativity and enhanced sustainable growth in Rodrigues now and for the future.

My Executive Council will be guided by the Sustainable Development Goals and the revamped SIDPR – Sustainable Integrated Development Plan for Rodrigues which the previous Regional Government has deliberately abandoned. We want to foster investment in Rodrigues, boost-up exports, make our tourism industry a world class one and create a thriving and dynamic island economy through digital marketing and real time communication. Agriculture, fishing, agro-industry and tourism will constitute the first four pillars that will give Rodrigues its economic take-off and for our survival in this difficult COVID pandemic and internationally unstable era. Priority will also be given to resolving the water and health problem, the creation of jobs, support to entrepreneurs, elimination of extreme poverty, amendment and consolidation of the RRA Act and the review of organization structures of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

One of our challenges will be also to fully open our port and our airport to international links which we believe will reduce the costs of imports of certain commodities and thereby reduce the cost of living and give competitiveness to locally produced goods. We also plan to work with Central Government so that Rodrigues becomes again the “jewel in the Mauritian crown” by reintroducing the duty-free zone in the whole island.

M. le président, nous sommes conscients de la lourde responsabilité placée en nous avec cette héritage de dix ans du précédent gouvernement qui n’a fait que piétiner dans tous les domaines. Malgré cela, je prends l’engagement, avec mon nouveau Conseil exécutif de tout faire pour faire valoir la confiance placée en nous par le peuple de Rodrigues. Rodrigues n’a malheureusement pas de ressources naturelles tel le, pétrole, l’or ou autres minéraux mais nous nous avons cette grande richesse qu’est notre ressource humaine sur laquelle nous capitaliserons. L’apartheid politique qui a tant fait souffrir le pays pendant des décennies disparaîtra. Chacun aura sa place dans l’édification d’une île Rodrigues libre, forte et solidaire où il fait bon vivre.

Sa zoli zil bizin transformé e bizin retourne enn Rodrigues POU TOU RODRIGUAIS!

Je fais ici un appel pour plus d’esprit d’ouverture et de tolérance les uns envers les autres. Il nous faut comprendre qu’à l’heure de la mondialisation, couplé par les effets néfastes de la crise sanitaire et de la guerre en Europe il nous faut des arguments solides pour pouvoir mener à bien le développement durable de Rodrigues au sein de la République de Maurice,

« *dibout lors nu lipié e avansé* » et survivre à long terme. Le peuple de Rodrigues a exprimé son choix légitime et nous a choisi. Il convient que cela soit respecté et d'éviter toute tentative d'usurpation de la volonté du peuple. C'est pour cela que je fais un appel à l'opposition à pratiquer l'opposition constructive, responsable et loyale.

M. le président, je voudrais, d'une part, remercier chaleureusement les quelques patriotes qui ont contre vents et marées, se sont inlassablement données corps et âmes pour la réunification de ces hommes et femmes politiques que constituent l'Alliance de Libération, et, d'autre part ces hommes et femmes qui ont travaillé jour et nuit pour cette victoire historique de l'Alliance.

En particulier, je voudrais saluer les hommes et les femmes qui ont formé l'Alliance de Libération, qui ont initié ce projet historique. Beaucoup de sacrifices ont été faits par les patriotes au niveau des différentes composantes de l'Alliance. Nous avons malgré tout gagné et c'est l'esprit d'équipe et de bon sens qui a été le ciment de ce changement historique.

Je suis heureux que le peuple de Rodrigues ait pu se libérer d'un gouvernement qui a trop longtemps prôné l'immobilisme économique et politique. Rodrigues vient de franchir l'étape de l'éveil politique.

M. le président, il y a aussi ceux qui sont resté dans l'ombre et qui nous ont aidé à gagné les élections, à faire le changement. J'ai une pensée spéciale pour les électeurs de ma circonscription, la région 5, Port Mathurin qui ont permis à mon colistier Louis Ange Perrine et à moi-même, d'être élus dans cette circonscription.

J'ai aussi une pensée spéciale pour tous les hommes et femmes qui ont su mettre leurs idées ensemble pour faire ce changement. Il y a Tiko, qui malgré des difficultés à premières vu insurmontables a su se sacrifier pour pouvoir réunir tous les partenaires de l'Alliance. Il y a eu un autre homme que j'appellerai l'homme de la gestion des conflits, Christian Leopold, aujourd'hui Chairperson, notre unificateur indispensable qui nous a grandement aidé. Finalement, je voudrais saluer Willy Auguste qui avec moi étions les gardiens de notre stratégie électorale et *last but not least*, un jeune homme téméraire et courageux, Jean François Collet de la radio 'web Moradio' qui a su aider à faire cet éveil de conscience qui a matérialisé le changement à Rodrigues. La voix a été plus forte que tout autre !

Merci à Marie Thérèse Clair qui a su garder la flamme du FPR allumée. Merci à nos collaborateurs l'Hon. Xavier Luc Duval, Vincent Perrine et au Leader de l'UPR, Franceau Grandcourt pour avoir accepté de trouver un compromis sur le partage des

responsabilités pendant notre mandat à venir. Au terme de notre accord je lui passerai le relais au poste de Chef Commissaire en 2024.

M. le président j'ai une pensée à tous ceux que l'on voulait inviter pour cette prestation de serment mais que l'on a dû limiter à 50 personnes à cause des restrictions en cours. Je compte sur leur compréhension. Le dossier de la lutte contre la COVID-19 sera une de nos priorités immédiates la semaine prochaine.

Merci au peuple de Rodrigues. Vive le grand changement. Vive la grande libération. Vive l'île Rodrigues. Vive la République de Maurice.

Merci et bon courage à tous.

(Applause)

DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER – ELECTION

Mr Chairperson: I will invite a Member of the Regional Assembly to propose and another Member of the Regional Assembly to second in turn a nomination for the office of Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Chief Commissioner (Mr Johnson Roussety): Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt be elected as Deputy Chief Commissioner.

The Second Local Region Member of Port Mathurin (Mr Louis Ange Perrine) rose and seconded.

Madam Chairperson: Is there any proposal? So, there being no other proposal, I declare Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt elected to the office of Deputy Chief Commissioner.

(Applause)

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH TO DEPUTY CHIEF COMMISSIONER

Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt, then made and subscribed before the Assembly the Oath of Allegiance prescribed in the First Schedule of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and signed the Roll of Membership.

The Deputy Chief Commissioner (Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt) (Standing on the upper step):

Le Président de la République, Son Excellence, M. Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK

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Le Vice-premier ministre et ministre du Logement, de l'Aménagement du Territoire et ministre du Tourisme, l'Hon. Steven Obeegadoo

Le Leader de l'Opposition, Charles Xavier-Luc Duval

Le Secrétaire Parlementaire Privé, l'Hon. Francisco François

Le Chef commissaire, M. Johnson Roussety, GOSK,

Le Président de l'Assemblée régionale de Rodrigues, M. Christian Leopold

Le Vice-président de l'Assemblée régionale de Rodrigues, M. Tolbize

Les membres de l'Assemblée Nationale et Régionale

Le Island Chief Executive

Chers Rodriguais et Rodriguaises, distinguées invités, mes dames et monsieur.

C'est avec un profond sentiment de gratitude et de mission accomplie que je vous adresse à cette occasion. Permettez-moi tout d'abord de féliciter tous les élus de l'Assemblée régionale de Rodrigues, le Chef commissaire, Johnson Roussety, le Président de l'Assemblée régionale et le Vice-président.

Je voudrais aussi exprimer toute ma reconnaissance envers tous les Rodriguais et Rodriguaises qui ont décidé de choisir le changement et une nouvelle orientation dans la gestion de notre île Rodrigues. La population a opté pour un nouveau souffle, un nouvel élan et un nouveau dynamisme pour un avenir meilleur à Rodrigues. La volonté du peuple s'est fait entendre et a été respectée.

Nous avons travaillé pour une même cause et la démocratie a remporté la victoire les jours des élections. Nous avons constaté que la population a beaucoup d'attente et d'exigence. Nous comprenons l'impatience des Rodriguais à voir établir une harmonie économique et social à Rodrigues et leurs attentes à ce que les problèmes majeurs, tel que, l'eau, la santé, le chômage, entre autre, soient réglés le plus vite possible. De ce fait, nous nous engageons au sein de la nouvelle équipe à nous atteler à la tâche avec toute notre capacité et volonté pour aider Rodrigues à relever tous les défis sur une base d'un développement durable. C'est pour cette mission que je m'engage à endosser humblement ma nouvelle responsabilité en tant qu'Adjoint au Chef commissaire et de servir Rodrigues comme un devoir sacré envers vous

Rodriguais et Rodriguaises, envers les jeunes et par extension envers vos enfants. De ce fait, je compte sur tout un chacun pour mener à bien mon mandat.

La réussite de notre gouvernement régional dépendra beaucoup de la population de Rodrigues. Nous avons besoin que vous avanciez, pas à pas avec nous. Nous croyons fermement que la collaboration et le soutien de la population sont la clé du succès de cette nouvelle équipe. Avec vous à nos côtés, chers Rodriguais, Rodriguaises, nous allons ensemble construire une île Rodrigues forte, solidaire et uni.

Je lance un vibrant appel à tous nos frères et sœurs de Rodrigues pour qu'ensemble nous travaillions main dans la main pour réussir, entre autre, le patriotisme économique avec pour motto 'Rodriguais avant tout'.

Je saisi cette occasion pour exprimer mes remerciements à mon épouse et à ma famille qui m'ont témoigné leurs soutiens inconditionnels. Je souhaiterais aussi remercier tous ceux et celles qui m'ont élu en tant qu'Adjoint au Chef commissaire et qui m'ont soutenu lors de cette exercice démocratique.

Encore une fois, je tiens à témoigner toutes ma reconnaissance envers tous les Rodriguais et Rodriguaises qui nous ont fait confiance. Nous avons une pensée spéciale pour nos compatriotes à l'île Maurice et d'ailleurs pour leurs soutiens et encouragements.

En tant que Rodriguais et patriote, je tiens aussi à remercier le gouvernement sortant pour leur contribution, diriger par l'ancien Chef commissaire, Serge Clair et je profite aussi pour lui souhaiter une bonne retraite et qu'il continue à contribuer au développement de Rodrigues. Je remercie aussi, tous les distingués invités qui nous ont honorés de leurs présences lors de cette cérémonie.

« Rodriguais, Rodriguaise ensam nou pou avancé. »

Que Dieu vous bénisse tous.

Je vous remercie tous pour votre attention.

(Applause)

APPOINTMENT OF MINORITY LEADER

The President of the Republic of Mauritius (Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK):

In pursuance of the provision of section 16 (1) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act, I am

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appointing Mrs Marie Rose Franchette Gaspard Pierre Louis, CSK, Minority Leader of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

Mr Chairperson: I will invite the appointed Minority leader to come forward to receive her letter of appointment.

(Applause)

*At this stage, the Chief Commissioner moves to Table to hand letter for appointment of
Commissioners by His Excellency*

APPOINTMENT OF COMMISSIONERS

The President of the Republic (Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK): In pursuance of the provision of section 34 (2) (c) of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 and acting on the advice of the Chief Commissioner, I am appointing as Commissioners the following Members: -

Mr Louis Ange Perrine

Mr Jean Nicolas Volbert

Ms Marie Christiane Agathe

Mr Jean Alain Wong So

Mr Joseph Varok Ravina

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH (OR AFFIRMATION)

TO OTHER COMMISSIONERS

Mr Chairperson: I will invite the Members in turn to move forward to receive their respective letter of appointment and to subscribe the oath or affirmation of office.

The following Members in turn made and subscribed the oath of office prescribed in the Third Schedule to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act 2001 and signed the Register.

Mr Louis Ange Perrine

Mr Jean Nicolas Volbert

Ms Marie Christiane Agathe

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Mr Jean Alain Wong So

Mr Joseph Varok Ravina

(Applause)

MESSAGE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC

The President of the Republic (Mr Prithvirajsing Roopun, GCSK):

Hon. Louis Steven Obeegadoo, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Use Planning, Minister of Tourism

Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier-Luc DUVAL, GCSK, FCA, Leader of the Opposition

Hon. Jean Francisco François, Parliamentary Private Secretary

Hon. Jean Buisson Leopold, Member of the National Assembly

Mr Johnson Roussety, GOSK, Chief Commissioner

Mr Franceau Aubret Grandcourt, Deputy Chief Commissioner

Mr Joseph Christian Leopold, Chairperson

Mr Justar Tolbize, Deputy Chairperson

Commissioners

Mrs Gaspard Pierre Louis, CSK, Minority Leader

Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly

All Protocols observed

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon. It is with immense pleasure that I am amongst you today for the swearing-in ceremony marking the inaugural first sitting of this present Assembly. The people of Rodrigues has exercised their constitutional rights and democratically elected their representatives through an electoral process.

I wish to thank all those who were involved in this exercise amidst the current public health constraint. I understand everything worked on peacefully and in a spirit of fair play.

Today's ceremony marks yet another milestone in the political history of the island of Rodrigues which enjoys a unique status within the constitutional set up of the Republic of Mauritius.

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As the Fifth Rodrigues Regional Assembly has now been duly constituted, I wish once again to extend my sincere congratulations to the Chief Commissioner and Deputy Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues, the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson of the Assembly, the Commissioners, Madam the Minority Leader and all other elected Members.

Chief Commissioner, Chairperson and Members of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly, distinguished guests, the Republic of Mauritius of which Rodrigues is an integral part is recognised as a full democracy. In this spirit, it is my earnest wish that you will all fully assume your responsibilities and answer to the aspirations of the Rodriguans. I have the firm conviction that Members of both sides of the Assembly shall act within the metes and bounds of the Constitutions of Mauritius, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly Act and the Standing Orders and Rules of the Assembly while maintaining mutual respect, trust and openness. I have no doubt that you will all stand up to the challenges looming ahead and collectively blend your efforts in shaping a brighter future for the countrymen.

Before ending, allow me also to present my best regards and greetings to the inhabitants of Rodrigues with whom I share a long standing bond.

Long live the Republic of Mauritius and thank you for your kind attention.

(Applause)

VOTE OF THANKS BY THE CHAIRPERSON

Mr Chairperson: I would like to express my warmest thanks to the President of the Republic of Mauritius and all the distinguished guests for their interest and presence here. Before we adjourn, I would invite everyone to stand up for L'Hymne aux Bâtisseurs.

(L'Hymne aux Bâtisseurs was played)

Respected Members, distinguished guests, in view of sanitary restriction prevailing, courtesy packs will be made available to you at this meeting.

His Excellency, Hon. the Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Leader of Opposition, the Chief Commissioner, the Deputy Chief Commissioner, I invite you to join me in the lobby of the Regional Assembly House after this meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Chief Commissioner: Mr Chairperson, Sir, I beg to move that the Assembly do now adjourn to Friday 18 March 2022 at 15.00 hours.

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The Deputy Chief Commissioner rose and seconded.

Question put and agreed to.

The House stands adjourned.

*At 16.27 hours, the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Friday 18 March 2022
at 15.00 hours.*