

THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

STATEMENT

BY

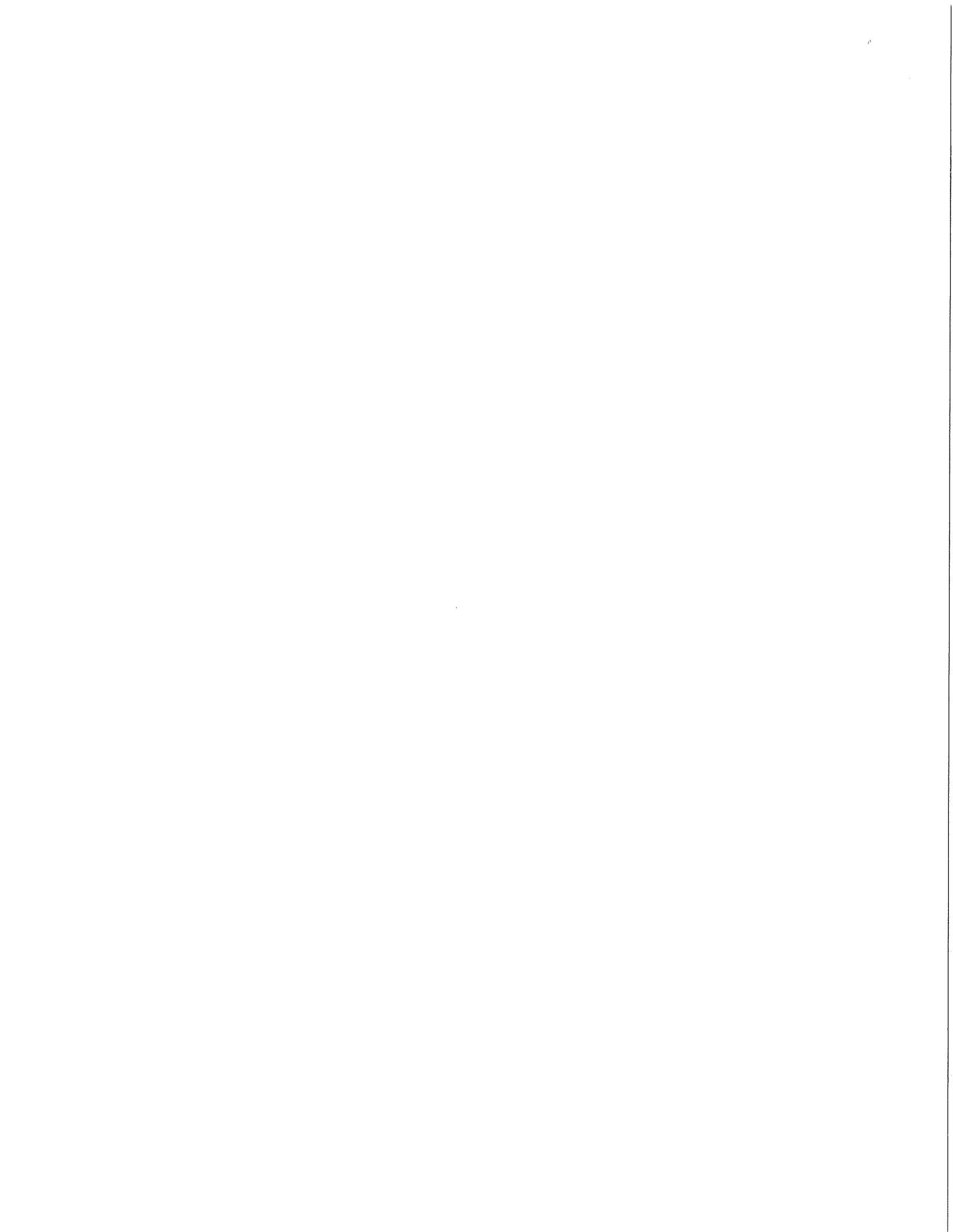
**DR. THE HON. NAVINCHANDRA RAMGOOLAM, GCSK, FRCP
PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

AT THE

**GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 68TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2013
NEW YORK**

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Mr President,

As we meet this morning to address global concerns and to seek ways to ensure progress and lasting peace, the people of Kenya are emerging from a terrorist act that has cost many lives and that has shaken the Continent. In expressing our solidarity to the Government and people of Kenya and to the families of all victims, Mauritius would also like to express its unreserved condemnation of this abominable and dastardly act of terrorism.

The Nairobi attack should also compel us to re-visit regional and global responses to national and international security threats including extension of support to countries in particular those on the African Continent.

Mr President,

Mauritius commends you for the theme you have proposed for the 68th session: the Post 2015 Development Agenda.

The goals which we set ourselves for the sustainable development of our national economies and for the global economy will shape the lives of generations to come.

Let me say, at the outset, that Mauritius welcomes the Report of the High Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and in particular the recommendation that "deliberations on a new development agenda must be guided by the vision of eradicating extreme poverty once for all, in the context of sustainable development".

We also welcome the Panel's view that one of the transformative shifts for the post-2015 should be the need "to bring a new sense of global partnership into national and international politics."

Mr President,

Climate Change should be one of the top priorities on the global agenda.

The IPCC Report on Climate Change, released yesterday, is unequivocal. It is clear scientific confirmation that we humans are responsible for global warming and that it is up to us to take appropriate measures to try and save our home planet.

We cannot and should no longer ignore the evidence that we, humans, are putting life on earth in jeopardy.

In our region, we have recently seen increased intensity and unpredictability of weather events.

In March this year, my own country experienced unprecedented flash floods that caused loss of human lives and also heavy economic losses.

No country is safe from natural disasters and from the damaging effects of Climate Change. But, for many Small Island Developing States the foreseeable consequences of climate change threaten us even more dramatically both in terms of human and economic development.

For some SIDS, they are an existential threat.

We fully support the Secretary-General's proposal to convene world leaders to a Climate Summit in 2014 in New York. We hope that this meeting will provide an opportunity for world leaders to focus our political attention on climate change and take meaningful action to mitigate its effects.

We must start putting the interests of our home planet above everything else.

The world needs a global, legally binding agreement on climate change by 2015.

At the Paris meeting of the Conference of Parties we should adopt a Treaty which is universal, ambitious and which addresses concretely the concerns of all, including those of the most vulnerable states.

Mr President,

The international community should also pay more attention to Disaster Risk Reduction and adopt a more concerted and accelerated approach to reach the goals set out in the Hyogo Framework for Action.

The time has come to address disaster risks and climate change adaptation through an integrated approach and adopt 'Resilience' as a common and shared vision.

Mauritius welcomes the decision of Japan to host the World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in early 2015 to review the implementation of the Hyogo Framework and to chart out an ambitious post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction.

In this regard, the organization of the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa next year, could not be more timely.

We hope that the Conference will be a landmark in the history of a more active and collaborative partnership among SIDS and between SIDS and the international community.

Furthermore, this could be an opportunity to give new meaning to the concept of "Global Concerns": issues which are or should be the concern of the global community at large and not only of those who are more vulnerable and more at risk. This would be in line with the spirit of the Global Partnership which the High level Panel has called for.

Mr President,

The prospects for growth of the global economy remain uncertain, largely as a result of multiple challenges faced by developed countries.

In such an interconnected and inter-dependent world as ours, not a single nation is immune from external shocks.

Small developing countries are very much concerned at the slowdown of global growth, decline in international trade, decreasing job opportunities and rising inequality.

Small states are particularly susceptible to external shocks as they are heavily dependent on foreign markets for trade, tourism and investments. They are also concerned about energy and food prices, which are subject to high volatility.

My Government believes that the post-2015 development agenda should include a Roadmap for an interconnected world economic system, premised on the assumption that the global economy could very well be as weak as its weakest links.

Of course, the specificities of some countries or regions and the pace at which transformative shifts are implemented may not always be appropriate for universal targets. But the conceptual approach to, and the construct of, the post-2015 agenda should more than ever before in history start with the shared conviction that economies are interdependent.

Eradicating extreme poverty, empowering more women, providing wider opportunities to young people for education and jobs, improving health care and management of energy, water and food are all universal concerns.

The conventional divides of the past are no longer valid.

We need a common development framework but with differentiated milestones and implementation strategies because of existing disparities in levels of development.

Actions taken at national level are not sufficient; there should also be reinforced cooperation and partnerships at regional and international levels. It is therefore imperative that the weaknesses and inequity of present global economic governance should be addressed urgently.

We are at a juncture where we have no option but to revisit the existing global economic governance mechanisms.

An overhaul of present economic governance is long overdue.

We must have a more participatory system of global economic governance where developing countries should be more involved in international economic decision-making and norm-setting.

The voice of all nations, big or small, should be equally heard and taken into consideration.

Mauritius has, on several occasions, reiterated that ECOSOC needs to play a more prominent role on global economic, social, and environmental issues.

We cannot overstate the importance of coordination and synergy to avoid duplication among UN parallel processes and initiatives so as to ensure optimal benefit for all.

Mr President,

My Government is of the view that all the processes initiated in Rio last year, including those relating to Strengthening of ECOSOC, Sustainable Development Goals and Sustainable Development Financing, should converge towards a single Post-2015 development agenda that should be adopted during a High Level Development Summit in 2015.

The Post-2015 development agenda should complete the unfinished business of the MDGs. However it should go beyond this and provide for a systemic change and new global economic governance.

The guiding principles enshrined in the Declaration on the Right to Development adopted in December 1986 are still relevant today and should not be overlooked in the formulation of a post-2015 development agenda.

My country will follow, with particular interest, the work of the High Level Political Forum especially since it replaces the Commission on Sustainable Development which was the primary intergovernmental forum for monitoring the implementation of the Barbados Plan of Action and the Mauritius Strategy on Implementation.

Mr President,

As we set the stage for the post-2015 development agenda, we must, as global leaders, define a new global vision for the world's oceans.

The United Nations system has played a crucial role in formulating, implementing and enforcing a new international order relating to the oceans.

Indeed, the adoption of UNCLOS in 1982 will remain as one of the landmarks of the 20th century.

The jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice and of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea has contributed to settlement of maritime disputes and to promotion of international peace, security and equity in a manner not always witnessed in other areas of international relations.

The establishment of the International Seabed Authority is another significant example of what international cooperation can lead to, in other sectors. The International Maritime Organisation, the Inter-Governmental Oceanic Commission of UNESCO are also making significant contributions.

I believe the United Nations must now take the lead in formulating a Global Vision for the Oceans which will in particular, expand economic space for small islands states nations, whilst ensuring sustainable use of living and non-living resources.

The health of our economies will depend on the health of our oceans.

Our vision for the future must also preserve the inherent values of Ocean space to which we are looking for economic expansion.

Mauritius has taken the initiative of launching a National Dialogue on how to promote the Ocean Economy as one of the main pillars of development. We urge the international community to build on what the world has achieved so far in relation to

ocean-related economic activities and conservation to propose to future generations a fundamental paradigm shift with respect to economic space.

Whilst this global vision and strategy will be beneficial to all nations it will be of particular interest to small islands. With limited land area these islands can potentially be Large Ocean States and thus overcome some of their vulnerabilities as SIDS.

As the world realizes the tremendous potential of Marine Renewable Energies, we will see the Oceans from a different perspective.

Mr President,

The United Nations has a key role to play in promoting the Rule of Law at both national and international levels.

Rule of law at the international level must be an integral part of the post-2015 agenda.

Open and participative democracy, accountability, transparency are not concepts which should be promoted only at national levels.

The United Nations should lead by example here.

We should focus on reforming our organization and making it more responsive to the needs and aspirations of its constituents.

In this context, we should work together on the reform of the Security Council, the revitalization of the General Assembly and improving the working methods of our organization.

Mauritius believes that a comprehensive reform of the Security Council should include reform in the membership of both the permanent and non-permanent categories. We reaffirm our commitment to the African Common position enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We believe that Africa should not be deprived of its right to permanent representation in the Council.

Likewise, we believe that Latin America deserves permanent representation in the Council and that SIDS should also be entitled to a seat on the Council.

Mauritius further reiterates its support to India's legitimate aspiration to a permanent seat in a reformed Security Council.

Mr President,

Mauritius reiterates its firm conviction that Rule of Law should prevail in the resolution of disputes, in accordance with the UN Charter.

We believe that the international community has an obligation to ensure that, in line with the principles of the Rule of Law, nations should submit their disputes to conciliation, mediation, adjudication or other peaceful means, both non-judicial and judicial.

The dismemberment of part of our territory, the Chagos Archipelago - prior to independence - by the then colonial power, the United Kingdom, in clear breach of international law, leaves the process of decolonisation not only of Mauritius but of Africa, incomplete.

Yet, the United Kingdom has shown no inclination to engage in any process that would lead to a settlement of this shameful part of its colonial past.

I am confident that the UK and the US would want to be on the right side of history.

States which look to the law and to the rules of the comity of nations for the resolution of disputes should not be frustrated by the lack of avenues under international law for settlement of these disputes.

Tromelin, which is also an integral part of our territory, is the subject of ongoing discussions with the French Government and pending a final resolution of this issue, Mauritius and France have concluded a framework agreement on co-management of the island and its surrounding maritime areas without prejudice to the sovereignty of Mauritius over Tromelin.

Mr President,

In our part of the world, we welcome the rise of a re-energised Africa.

The return to normalcy in Mali and the recent holding of elections there, show the relevance of international partnerships. The situation in Madagascar and the Democratic Republic of the Congo will, hopefully, be resolved soon through the support of the International Community to SADC initiatives in this regard.

Earlier this year, Mauritius hosted an African Ministerial Conference on Regional Integration. We are convinced that African nations will benefit significantly from a greater focus on regional cooperation, I am pleased to note that the Solemn Declaration on the 50th Anniversary of the African Union supports this view.

Mr President,

The tragic events in Syria over the last two years are of serious concern to the global community. There is also concern about attempts to by-pass the Security Council and initiate action in breach of the UN Charter. Respect for Rule of Law at international level entails compliance with internationally agreed norms. Mauritius will support decisions taken by organs of the UN under the Charter.

We welcome the Security Council resolution which addresses one of the issues in the Syrian crisis.

However, the international community needs to go further and assist the political dialogue which will enable the Syrian people to live in peace.

Mauritius also supports a Middle East which is free of Weapons of Mass Destruction. This will mean that no country in the region should hold nuclear or chemical weapons.

Mauritius is convinced that an essential condition for peace and prosperity in the Middle East is the peaceful co-existence of the States of Palestine and Israel.

Mauritius wishes to reiterate its solidarity with the Palestine National Authority and the Palestinian people in their rightful aspiration to win full recognition as a UN Member State.

Mauritius also supports the peaceful restoration of democracy in Egypt which has a key role to play in promoting stability and security in the region.

The international community cannot condone the removal, by force, from office and the detention of a democratically elected leader.

Monsieur le Président,

L'Assemblée générale des Nations Unies nous offre une occasion unique de mettre en évidence les défis les plus urgents auxquels l'humanité est confrontée.

Il nous appartient de saisir cet instant privilégié afin de passer en revue les événements récents et de tracer de nouvelles voies qui puissent répondre à ces défis, dans le respect des principes énoncés par la Charte des Nations Unies.

Ces défis, nous devons les relever dans le cadre d'une vision partagée de paix, de sécurité, d'inter-dépendance et de respect des droits et libertés fondamentaux.

Nous devons rester intraitables quant à la défense du droit au développement !

Nous avons aussi le devoir, dans une démarche différenciée, de nous assurer que notre modèle de développement soit durable et nous permette de transmettre aux générations futures les valeurs de notre planète.

Notre réussite dépendra de la volonté de tous et de l'engagement collectif.

Si nous réussissons, l'Histoire retiendra que nous avons répondu aux défis du présent et que nous avons été à la hauteur de ce que l'avenir attend de nous.

Mr President,

We need to act together, in a spirit of compromise and tolerance.

There isn't, and never will be, ideal solutions which will satisfy all of us.

We, the leaders of our respective countries, need to look beyond the horizon and have the moral courage to look at our common humanity so that we may move towards making our world a better, more prosperous and safer place for the whole of human kind.

I thank you for your attention.

