



## REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

### Message of Hon. Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail on the occasion of the International Human Rights Day 2022

The 10<sup>th</sup> December 2022 commemorates the 74<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 10 December 1948. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings.

The Declaration sets out 30 fundamental human rights encompassing civil political, economic, social and cultural rights. It is the first globally agreed document that states that all human beings are free and equal to each other, regardless of sex, colour, creed, religion or other attributes.

The United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights has chosen the slogan for this year's celebrations to be "Dignity, Freedom, and Justice for All" and has issued a call to **Stand Up for Human Rights**. The focus is on the following three objectives: to educate, to promote attitude change and to empower and mobilise. The aim is to empower citizens with knowledge pertaining to their rights and encourage them to stand up for Human Rights.

Mauritius is party to 7 core United Nations conventions on human rights and has acceded to almost all other conventions at regional level. As a democratic state, our basic Human Rights are enshrined in our Constitution, which provides for the right to education, and for participation in public affairs as well as freedom of assembly, freedom of expression and access to justice, amongst others.

Government is committed to ensure that every Mauritian enjoys his/her fundamental human rights. Provision of free health care services, free education, adequate social housing and social security services remain a priority. The implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development also remains high on the Government agenda. Cooperation with international organisations will be strengthened for enhanced capacity in promoting human rights values.

It is worth noting that the efforts of the Government of Mauritius in promoting and protecting the human rights of its citizens has been praised at international level. Mauritius is ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in Sub-Saharan Africa as per the United Nations Human Development Report 2021/2022 and is now considered as one of the countries with a very high human development.

Mauritius ranks 1<sup>st</sup> out of 54 countries in Africa where governance is concerned according to the Mo Ibrahim Index of African Governance The Index takes into consideration issues such as education, health, social protection, sustainable environment, security and safety, public administration, inclusion and equality, rule of law and justice, business environment and infrastructure.

To promote knowledge on Human Rights, my Ministry has organized various activities, namely an essay competition to better understand what humanitarian works entail and a video depicting measures adopted by Government to provide assistance to persons in difficulties when natural calamities occur.

In collaboration with the Commonwealth Secretariat, an Awareness Session on the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment was organized for 435 new recruits of the Police Force. Training over 3 days was also imparted to 50 senior officers of the Police and Prisons department.

To mark the International Human Rights Day this year, an innovative approach has been adopted. A Slam Competition has been organized to encourage the young to express themselves poetically. An Art Atelier has been held for 100 children for them to convey their understanding of human rights through creative drawings.

Another original initiative is the launching of an **Online Quiz on Human Rights**. The aim is to learn about human rights in a simple, interesting and fun manner. I invite you all to test your knowledge and increase your understanding of Human Rights by taking the Online Quiz on Human rights, which can be accessed on the website of the Human Rights Division or at <https://humanrightsquiz.com>

I also invite each and everyone to become a Champion of Human Rights.

**Hon. Alan GANOO**  
**Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail,**  
**Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional**  
**Integration and International Trade**

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