



REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

**MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, REGIONAL INTEGRATION
AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE**

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The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius presents its compliments to the Embassy of the United States of America in Mauritius and with reference to the latter's Note Verbale No. MP 149-2012 dated 27 September 2012 pertaining to the 11th Edition of the U.S. Department of Labour's 2011 Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labour has the honour to forward hereunder the following views of the Government of Mauritius on the said Report:

- (i) The Report was analysed by an inter-ministerial meeting under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister's Office;
- (ii) The Government of Mauritius observes that Mauritius was ranked as a Tier 1 Country by the United States Department of Labour Trafficking in Persons Report 2012 and where it was highlighted that Mauritius has made notable efforts to prevent trafficking of Children for sexual purposes and has reduced the demand for commercial sex acts during the year. Since the definition of child labour includes commercial and sexual exploitation of children, and the US Report on Child Labour 2012 classified Mauritius for having done minimal advancement in efforts to eliminate the worst form of child labour, the Government of Mauritius therefore considers the two reports published by the same US Department to be contradictory to each other;
- (iii) On 2 August 2012, the Government of Mauritius forwarded an updated report on the initiatives being undertaken by the Government to ensure that children stay in School and to prevent the worst forms of child labour. However regrettably it would seem that the US Department of Labour has not taken into account the content of that report;
- (iv) It is also noted that a number of statements contained in the Report were not substantiated and sources of statistics were absent. Mention was not made of the source of anecdotal reports and the references thereto were also not clear;
- (v) Various actions are ongoing to prevent child labour such as sensitization and prevention campaign with children/youth/parents, radio programmes, capacity building of officers, children protection programme/scheme and inspection visits;
- (vi) The Mauritian police force is also carrying the following new activities:
 - (a) A "crime Stoppers" Campaign has been launched where people are able to communicate information to the Police about crimes through a hotline. An average of 30 calls are received per day;

- (b) A Protective Behaviour Programme is being carried out for primary and secondary school children;
 - (c) Working sessions are conducted with school administration and staff to adopt appropriate measures at their level to dissuade school girls from engaging in prostitution.
- (vii) The relevant authorities in Mauritius are presently working on a Comprehensive Children's Bill which will harmonise all legislations pertaining to children issues in line with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, thus improving children's lives and ensuring better protection for them; and
- (viii) A Terms of Reference for the development of a National Child Protection Strategy has also been prepared with a view to preventing and responding to any exploitation of children and other child protection related issues and risks.

The Government of Mauritius has also decided to adopt the following additional measures:

- (i) The "Working Together" Committee comprising all the stakeholders working on children related issues will be the appropriate forum for thrashing out problems related to children matters;
- (ii) An assesment of the existing policies adopted by the different stakeholders and their impacts on children will also be carried out;
- (iii) The Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare has been tasked to set up a central database and standard operating procedures for the sharing of information in order to have a comprehensive view of the child labour and remedial actions taken by Government.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Embassy of the United States of America in Mauritius the assurances of its highest consideration.



**Embassy of the United States of America
Port Louis, Mauritius**