



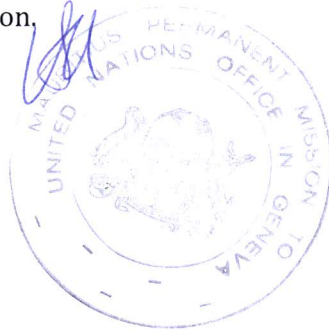
**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS TO THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER
INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS**

**MISSION PERMANENTE DE LA REPUBLIQUE DE MAURICE AUPRES DES NATIONS UNIES
ET DES AUTRES ORGANISATIONS INTERNATIONALES**

No. 12 / 2013 (MMG/ HR/ 28/ 1)

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and with reference to its Note (ref. YB/GN/TT) dated 3rd December 2012 transmitting a questionnaire in relation to Human Rights Council resolution A/HRC/21/30 entitled 'Elaboration of international complementary standards to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination', has the honour to attach herewith the responses of the Government of the Republic of Mauritius thereto.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.



Geneva, 25th January 2013

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights

Palais Wilson

CH 1211 Geneva 10

**Ad Hoc Committee on the elaboration of complementary standards to the
International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial
Discrimination**

QUESTIONNAIRE (Paragraph 4 of A/HRC/21/30)

- (i) Kindly provide information on the phenomenon of xenophobia in your national context including any general trends**

No Statistics available on xenophobia

The phenomena of xenophobia do not exist in Mauritius, as we form part of a multicultural and multiracial society. Mauritians are therefore, made up of African, European, and Asian origins who live in complete peace and harmony respectful of their differences

- (ii) How is xenophobia addressed in your country (include any legal and judicial frameworks and practices, substantive and procedural measures)?**

Xenophobia is not defined or specifically addressed in our legal and judicial frameworks. However freedom from discrimination which encompasses various types of discrimination is deeply entrenched in the Constitution of Mauritius. Subject to certain provisos, any discriminatory law or discriminatory treatment by public officials or bodies and which are based on race, caste, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex is strictly prohibited.

- (a) The Constitution** *[Please refer also to Annex A]*

Section 3 of the Constitution entitled "Fundamental rights and freedoms of the individual" reads as follows:-

It is hereby recognised and declared that in Mauritius there have existed and shall continue to exist without discrimination by reason of race, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for rights and freedoms of others and for the public interest, each and all of the following human rights and fundamental freedoms –

- (a) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and the protection to the law;
- (b) freedom of conscience, of expression, of assembly and association and freedom to establish schools; and
- (c) the right of the individual to protection for the privacy of his home and other property and from deprivation of property without compensation,

and the provisions of this Chapter shall have effect for the purpose of affording protection to those rights and freedoms subject to such limitations of that protection as are contained in those provisions, being limitations designed to ensure that the enjoyment of those rights and

freedoms by any individual does not prejudice the rights and freedoms of others or the public interest.

Section 16 of the Constitution provides that no law shall make any provision that is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect. The term “discriminatory” means affording different treatment to different persons attributable wholly or mainly to their respective descriptions by race, caste, place of origin, political opinions, colour, creed or sex whereby persons of one such description are subjected to disabilities or restrictions to which persons of another such description are not made subject or are accorded privileges or advantages that are not accorded to persons of another such description.

(b) Relevant legislation *[Please refer also to Annex B]*

One of the main enactments in respect to the protection of the right against discrimination is the **Equal Opportunities Act (EOA)**. This Act has recently been amended to provide for the establishment of a full-fledged Equal Opportunities Commission and of an Equal Opportunities Tribunal to ensure better protection from discrimination as it prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of age, caste, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation. The legislation also prohibits discrimination by victimisation.

(c) Case law (summaries)

1. In the case of **Raj Dayal v. Gilbert Ahnee [2002] SCJ 303**, the plaintiff was the Commissioner of Police when in 1995 the defendants wrote and caused to be published an article which, in the plaintiff’s view, conveyed to the readers that there is a grotesque conflict between his role as Commissioner of Police and the performance of public rituals pertaining to his faith. According to the plaintiff, he was sincerely involved in the practice of his religious faith and this did not in any way conflict with his obligations and duties as Commissioner of Police. The plaintiff also argued that there was nothing which prevented him from going about with his spiritual practice in public or in private in the company of other people.

The defendant, however, deposed in Court to the effect that he was “shocked and scandalized” to see the plaintiff on television actively participating in religious rituals on the occasion of Hindu festivals. According to the defendant, the plaintiff’s position as Commissioner of Police imposed on him “a devoir de reserve” and that as a high ranking officer of the State, the plaintiff should have refrained from actively and publicly participating in religious rites.

The Court held that the article in issue went much beyond the mere expression of the author’s views on secularism. The Court noted that the sincerity of purpose of a person who is involved in the practice of his religious faith was being questioned, and that the plaintiff’s conduct was being referred to as “une indigne exploitation populiste des sentiments religieux”.

The article was held to be highly defamatory, and damages were awarded to the plaintiff.

2. In the case of **Government Teachers Union v Roman Catholic Education Authority** [1987 MR 88 at page 94], Lallah ASPJ, as he then was, said:

“Further our State being secular in character, even where the Constitution in section 14(1) confers a fundamental right on religious denominations or religious, social, ethnic or cultural associations or groups to establish and maintain schools at their own expense, the responsibility of regulating such schools is reserved to the State, by section 14(2), in the interests of students to an extent reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.”

3. In the case of **Roman Catholic Diocese of Port Louis v Minister of Education 1991 MR 176**, the Court said:

“Section 14 only formally protects the right of certain classes of persons in the religious, cultural and social fields to establish schools at their own expense. We are not in a situation where the right to establish denominational, or minority group, schools is guaranteed simpliciter, a situation which has resulted in the formulation, in certain foreign texts and decisions, of the principle that the State then has a constitutional duty to provide funds, where necessary, to enable that right to be exercised, and to do so with no unnecessary strings attached.”

4. In the case of **Bishop of Roman Catholic Diocese of Port Louis and others v Suttyhudeo Tengur and others, Privy Council Appeal No.21 of 2003**, it was held that sections 3(b) and 14(1) of the Constitution, read together made it plain that denominational groups were entitled, without discrimination between one group and another, to establish and maintain schools, but it was a limited right, protected only if the schools were maintained and established without expense to the State. The Catholic colleges were originally established without expense to the State but had, by the time Mr. Tengur commenced his action, ceased to be so maintained. The appellants were thus no longer exercising a right protected by sections 3 and 14. As section 16(2) made it clear, it was discrimination in the public domain, through the involvement of the State, which brought the prohibition on discriminatory treatment into play. If the Catholic colleges were still self-financing, their admission policy would not have attracted the operation of section 16(2) since although some potential pupils would still be treated in a discriminatory manner, such treatment would not be “by any person acting in the performance of any public function conferred by any law” or “otherwise in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority”.

The following excerpts from the case are of relevance -

“Since the Catholic colleges now receive a regular grant in aid from public funds, section 35 of the Education Act also requires that they be open to pupils of any religion: while they have always admitted non-Roman Catholic pupils, the section must require that they be equally open to pupils of any religion as was made clear by regulation 52(1)(a) of the 1957 Regulations, which forbade refusal of admission to any pupil on the grounds of religion. Such refusal would inevitably be the result in the case of any non-Roman Catholic applicant to the Catholic colleges

who would qualify for admission on the basis of his or her CPE grading but is refused admission to accommodate the Catholic colleges' policy of filling 50 per cent of places with Roman Catholic pupils."

As section 16(2) of the Constitution makes it clear, it is discrimination in the public domain, through the involvement of the state, which brings the prohibition on discriminatory treatment into play. If the Catholic colleges were entirely self-financing, the appellants' admission policy would not attract the operation of section 16(2) since although some potential pupils would still be treated in a discriminatory manner, such treatment would not be "by any person acting in the performance of any public function conferred by any law" or "otherwise in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public authority".

(iii) Which national mechanisms with competences to protect against and prevent all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance does your country have in place? Kindly indicate the(ir) mandate(s) and powers, including any proposals for improvement on the basis of national experience.

a. The **National Human Rights Commission (NHRC)** was established under the Protection of the Human Rights Act 1998 to, *inter alia*, enquire into human rights complaints, complaints against the Police, visits to any Police station, prison or place of detention, to study the living conditions of inmates and the way they are being treated and to ensure that the legislative framework promotes and protects human rights. The NHRC became operational as from April 2001.

b. The **Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act 2012** was passed in the National Assembly to amend the Protection of Human Rights Act, to provide for the National Human Rights Commission to operate through three Divisions, namely the Human Rights Division, the Police Complaints Division and the National Preventive Mechanism Division. The structure and functioning of the National Human Rights Commission have been reviewed with the aim of broadening its mandate and increasing its efficiency. The Protection of Human Rights (Amendment) Act is however not yet into operation.

c. In addition to the above legislation, two new acts: **The Police Complaints Act (PCA)** and the **National Preventive Mechanism Act (NPMA)** have been passed and are yet to come into force.

1. The main object of the **PCA** is provide for the setting up, within the National Human Rights Commission of an Independent Police Complaints Division to investigate complaints made against members of the Police Force, other than allegations of corruption and money laundering which offences fall under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

2. The **NPMA** was passed to enable Mauritius to comply with its international obligations under the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT). OPCAT provides for a system of regular visits by mechanisms at the international and national levels to prevent all forms of ill-treatment of people who are deprived of their liberty. It establishes the Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT) as the international preventive mechanism with a global remit. It was granted accreditation by the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions in 2002 and is governed by the Principles Relating to the Status of National Institutions, Competence and Responsibilities ("Paris Principles"). The Sub-Committee on Accreditation of the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions re-accredited Status A to the National Human Rights Commission in 2008 and the latter is so accredited as at date.

The actual law provides that the Commission has within its mandate the power to receive and enquire into any written complaint from any person alleging that any of his human rights has been, is being or is likely to be violated by the act or omission of any other person acting in the performance of any public function conferred by any law or otherwise in the performance of the functions of any public office or any public body. The NHRC mainly enquires into complaints from persons alleging violation of their rights under Chapter II of the Constitution by the acts of public bodies or public officers and complaints against acts of members of the police force. Any complaints in respect of alleged violations of the right against discrimination may therefore also be looked into by the Commission. It can further enquire of its own motion into such acts.

- d. The Equal Opportunities Act (EOA) has recently been amended to provide for the establishment of a full-fledged **Equal Opportunities Commission** to ensure better protection from discrimination as it prohibits both direct and indirect discrimination on the grounds of age, caste, creed, ethnic origin, impairment, marital status, place of origin, political opinion, race, sex or sexual orientation. The legislation also prohibits discrimination by victimisation.

The Commission is fully operational since 24 April 2012. Its main functions include inter-alia to:- (i) work towards the elimination of discrimination, and the promotion of equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status; (ii) carry out an investigation of its own motion or following a complaint; (iii) attempt to reconcile the parties to whom and against whom a complaint relates; (iv) conduct and foster research and educational and other programmes for the purpose of eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different status; and (v) prepare appropriate guidelines and codes for the avoidance of discrimination and take all necessary measures to ensure that the guideline and codes are brought to the attention of employers and the public at large.

Following a complaint made to the Commission, the latter will as the case may be, hold a preliminary examination of the complaint, investigate, and where applicable conduct a conciliation process. In the event that the parties cannot reach any agreement, a report is prepared and the case is referred to the **Equal Opportunities Tribunal** with the consent of the complainant.

The Equal Opportunities Tribunal shall have jurisdiction inter alia to -

- (a) to hear and determine complaints referred to it by the Commission;
- (b) to issue an interim order as a matter of urgency for the purpose of—
 - (i) preventing serious and irreparable damage to a person or category of persons;
 - (ii) protecting the public interest; or
 - (iii) preventing a person from taking any step that would hinder or impede a hearing before the Tribunal;
- (c) to make—
 - (i) an order declaring the rights of the complainant and the respondent in relation to the act to which the complaint relates;
 - (ii) an order requiring the respondent to pay to the complainant, within such time as it may determine, compensation in an amount not exceeding 500,000 rupees; or
 - (iii) a recommendation that the respondent takes, within a specified period, action appearing to the Tribunal to be practicable for the purpose of obviating or reducing the adverse effect on the complainant of any act of discrimination to which the complaint relates; and
- (d) to issue such directives as it considers necessary to ensure compliance with the Equal Opportunities Act.

e. The **Truth and Justice Commission Act 2008** which came into operation on 1 February 2009 on the very day commemorating the abolition of slavery in Mauritius, provides for the setting up of the Truth and Justice Commission which shall conduct inquiries into slavery and indentured labour during the colonial period in Mauritius, determine appropriate measures to be extended to descendants of slaves and indentured labourers, enquire into complaints made by persons aggrieved by dispossession or prescription of any land in which they claim to have an interest and prepare a comprehensive report of its activities and findings based on factual and objective information and evidence. The Truth and Justice Commission has already submitted its recommendations which are being studied at the level of an Inter-Ministerial Committee. Some of the recommendations have already been approved by Government for implementation.

Our Constitution (Section 16), The Protection of Human Rights Act 1998, The Equal Opportunities Act 2008 have been enacted to protect against, and prevent, all forms and manifestations of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia, ..etc in Mauritius. The following Institutions act as a safeguard against any such practice:-

- (a) The Judiciary;
- (b) The Human Rights Commission,
- (c) The Equal Opportunities Commission,
- (d) The Ombudsperson for Children;
- (e) The Ombudsman's Office, ...etc

- (iv) Kindly provide information or any comments your country might have on the issue of procedural gaps to the ICERD, including any legal and judicial frameworks and practices, substantive and procedural measures.

None

- (v) Would your country have any comments on the issue of the impact of reservations on the implementation to the ICERD? Is there a need for reservations and why?

None

- (vi) Would your country have any comments concerning article 14 of the ICERD (declaration by State Party recognising the competency of the Committee to receive/consider individual complaints?)

None

- (vii) Which CERD recommendations has your country implemented with regard to national mechanisms and xenophobia, including any legal and judicial frameworks and practices, substantive and procedural measures?. What has been your national experience (including challenges) in this regard?

Besides the legal protection, the setting up of the Equal Opportunities Commission is a major safeguard against problem of discrimination.

(viii) How far is assistance provided to victims and/or affected communities of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance at the domestic level? How do victims and/or affected communities participate fully and effectively in relevant processes and mechanisms?

Section 17 of the Constitution provides that a citizen who alleges that his right under, inter alia, section 16 of the Constitution is being or is likely to be contravened may apply to the Supreme Court for redress.

Any victim and/or affected community may enter a case in damages against any alleged perpetrator of a racial discrimination, based on Section 17 of the Constitution. This section provides an effective judicial remedy for breaches of rights under Chapter II of the Constitution (which includes section 16). For example, in the case of **S. Tengur and others v. Bishop of Roman Catholic Diocese of Port-Louis and Others [2002 SCJ 298]**, the Supreme Court held that an agreement between the Government and operated by the Ministry of Education and Scientific Research on the one hand and Catholic Colleges owned by the Defendants on the other was discriminatory as the agreement allowed the Catholic Colleges to allocate 50% of their seats to students of Roman Catholic faith. The catholic schools received their funding, mainly, if not wholly, from Government and thus were performing a public function. The defendants were unable to show any justification for the differentiation in allocation of 50% of their seats. The judgment of the Supreme Court was confirmed on appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council.

It is also to be noted that in the 2012-2015 Government Programme, provision has been made for the introduction of (i) a Police and Criminal Evidence Bill which will include the protection of victims rights etc and (ii) new legislation to specifically cater for the provision of assistance and protection of victims and witnesses in order to better safeguard the rights and interests of these categories of persons.

Whenever a person is a victim of racism, the above Institutions (The Judiciary; The Human Rights Commission; The Equal Opportunities Commission; The Ombudsperson for Children; The Ombudsman's Office, ...etc) may be approached to lodge a case or complaint. These Institutions carry out an investigation and if conclusion is reached that there is evidence of discrimination, these may make recommendations or take action accordingly. These may also proceed with a conciliation process

(Section 32 of the Equal Opportunities Act 2008). Compensation may also be awarded to aggrieved parties.

(ix) With regard to the topics of this questionnaire:

a. Kindly indicate any possible recommendations your country would wish to provide and

None

b. Are there any additional comments or information your country wishes to provide in relation to xenophobia, national mechanisms or procedural gaps?

None

ANNEX A – EXTRACTS OF RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE CONSTITUTION

1. Section 11(1), (4) & (5) of the Constitution entitled “Protection of freedom of conscience” reads:-
(1) Except with his own consent, no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of conscience, and for the purposes of this section, that freedom includes freedom of thought and of religion, freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and both in public and in private, to manifest and propaagate his religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance.

(...)

(4) No person shall be compelled to take any oath that is contrary to his religion or belief or to take any oath in a manner that is contrary to his religion or belief.

(...)

(5) *Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of this section to the extent that the law in question makes provision*

- (a) *in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health; or*
- (b) *for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedoms of other persons, including the right to observe and practice any religion or belief without the unsolicited intervention of persons professing any other religion or belief, except so far as that provision or, as the case may be, the thing done under its authority is shown not to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.*

2. **Section 12 of the Constitution** guarantees the freedom of expression. This means that people can voice dissent within a democratic framework, allowing for a divergence of opinions on all issues of national interest. This provision confers the freedom to practise one's own culture, to express oneself in one's language, or through writing, music, drama, dancing, painting or even culinary arts. The freedom to receive and impart ideas and information without interference implies that one can discuss political, social, cultural, economic issues as long as the rights and freedoms of others are not impinged upon. The press has the liberty to criticize politicians and other persons in the public eye and to discuss public issues freely. Wireless broadcasting allows for a diversity of expression and opinion and the promotion of culture.

3. **Section 14 of the Constitution** further provides for the "Protection of the freedom to establish schools" and reads as follows: '

- (1) No religious denomination and no religious, social, ethnic or cultural association or group shall be prevented from establishing and maintaining schools at its own expense.
- (2) Nothing contained in or done under the authority of any law shall be held to be inconsistent with or in contravention of subsection (1) to the extent that the law in question makes provision –
 - (a) in the interests of defense, public safety, public order, public morality or public health; or
 - (b) for regulating such schools in the interests of persons receiving instruction in them,
 - i. except so far as that provision or, as the case may be, the thing done under its authority is shown not to be reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

[However, it is understood that the specific conditions as specified as the Education regulations (relating to school premises and infrastructure) as well as the program offered to student have to be met.]

- (3) No person shall be prevented from sending to any such school a child of whom that person is parent or guardian by reason only that the school is not a school established or maintained by the Government.
- (4) In subsection (3), "child" includes a stepchild and a child adopted in a manner recognized by law, and "parent" shall be construed accordingly.

ANNEX B – SUMMARY OF RELEVANT ENACTMENTS

1. Under the **Criminal Code**, there are offences pertaining to discrimination on grounds of race or creed in general –

1. Section 51 provides for “Stirring up war against the State”.
2. Section 62 provides for “Stirring up civil war”.
3. Section 183 provides for “Interference with freedom of conscience”.
4. Section 184 provides for “Disturbing religious ceremony”.
5. Section 185 provides for “Outrage on religious worship”.
6. Section 206 provides for “Outrage against public and religious morality”.
7. Section 282 provides for “Stirring up racial hatred”.
8. Section 283 provides for “Sedition”.
9. Section 284 provides for “Inciting to disobedience or resistance to law”.
10. Section 286 provides for “Importing seditious publication”.
11. Section 287A provides for “Prohibiting circulation of seditious publication”.

Upon complaints made to the police, an investigation is carried out by the police and if charges are found to be substantiated, the office of the Director of Public Prosecutions advises prosecution.

2. To counter the use of the internet in the dissemination of discriminatory or racist messages, the **Information and Communication Technologies Act 2001** criminalises the use of an information and communication service in the following circumstances:
 - (a) for the transmission or reception of a message which is grossly offensive, or of an indecent, obscene or menacing character; or
 - (b) for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience or needless anxiety to any person; and
 - (c) for the transmission of a message which is of a nature likely to endanger or compromise State defence, public safety or public order.
3. An **Independent Broadcasting Authority** was created in 2001 to oversee the provision of radio and television broadcasting services. Its objects also include the preservation and promotion of the

plural nature of Mauritian culture by ensuring that licensees include, in their services, programmes reflecting the linguistic and cultural diversity of Mauritius. A Standards Committee set up under the IBA is responsible for the drawing up of a code of ethics for licensees and a code of advertising practice.

4. The **Code of Conduct** for Broadcasting Services, in its Preamble, stresses on the upholding of the fundamental principle *“that the freedom of all broadcasting licensees is indivisible from, and subject to, the same restraints as those relevant to the individual person, and is founded on the individual’s right to be informed and to freely receive and disseminate opinions.”* Further, Broadcasting licensees may not broadcast *“any material which is indecent, obscene or offensive to public morals or offensive to the religious convictions or feelings of any section of the population or likely to prejudice the safety of the State or the public order or relations between sections of the population.”* The Authority has set up a Complaints Committee which considers and adjudicates *inter alia* on any complaint of breaches or anticipated breaches of the codes and unjust or unfair treatment or the likelihood of such treatment in a broadcast programme
5. The **Apravasi Ghat Trust Fund** has been set up following the passing of the **Apravasi Ghat Trust Fund Act in 2001** and amended in 2006 and 2011. The objectives of the Fund are to promote, *inter alia*, the social and cultural aspects of sites associated with indentured labour. Section 4 of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund Act provides that the Trust Fund shall establish, administer, manage, maintain and promote the Aapravasi Ghat as a national, regional and international heritage site, preserve, manage and restore the aesthetic and architectural aspects of Aapravasi Ghat and related sites; set up a museum at the Aapravasi Ghat and create public awareness on the history of indentured labour; establish links with appropriate national, regional and international organizations in line with the objects of the Act; identify and acquire sites, buildings and structures associated with indentured labour; and encourage and support interdisciplinary scientific research related to indentured labour and to the sites specified in the schedule to the Act.
6. The **‘Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund’ (The “Fund”)** is established under the **Le Morne Heritage Trust Fund Act**. Its main objects are, amongst others, to promote Le Morne as a national, regional and international memorial site, to preserve and promote the historical, cultural, environmental and ecological aspects of Le Morne, to collect, publish and disseminate information pertaining to the history of slavery and “marronage”.
7. The objects of the **Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund** includes *inter alia* the preservation and promotion of African arts and culture; to preserve and promote Creole arts and culture; collect, publish and disseminate information with respect to the African and Creole arts and culture or organise lectures, seminars, workshops, exhibitions and any other activities leading to the better understanding of the African and Creole arts and culture; to conduct research and to reflect on the impact slavery has had in Mauritius; and to establish useful links with organisations engaged in similar activities locally and internationally.
8. The **Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Act** was set up in 1989. Its main objects being to –
 - (a) preserve and promote Islamic art and culture;
 - (b) promote study of Arabic and Urdu;

- (c) collect, publish and disseminate valuable information pertaining to Islamic art and culture through the establishment of educational and welfare institutions affiliated to the Centre;
 - (d) organise lectures, seminars, workshop, exhibitions and any other activities which will lead to a better understanding of Islamic art and culture;
 - (e) create facilities for documentation and research on Islamic art and culture;
 - (f) provide training in relevant fields of study;
 - (g) establish useful links with organisations engaged in similar activities locally and internationally;
 - (h) to deal with matters relating to the organising, facilitating, monitoring and supervision of Islamic pilgrimage to the holy places.
9. The **Mauritian Cultural Centre Trust**, set up under the **Mauritian Cultural Centre Trust Act**, aims at promoting Mauritian culture and developing a plural Mauritian cultural identity through, inter-alia -
- the establishment of a register of Mauritian artists and associations of artists;
 - the creation of facilities for multi-disciplinary documentation and research;
 - the collection, publication and dissemination of information on Mauritian culture, and history;
 - the organization of lectures, seminars, workshops, exhibitions and other activities to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding, and practice of Mauritian culture;
 - the collaboration with other Cultural Centres both at national and international levels; and
 - the establishment of links with organizations engaged in similar activities locally and internationally;
 - the identification, development and perpetuation of Mauritian cultural heritage inclusive of oral traditions and folk arts;
 - showcasing Mauritian culture worldwide, including the setting up of a website;
 - encouraging Mauritian artistic and cultural creativity; and
 - setting up a Mauritian Cultural Troupe.
10. The **Mauritius Marathi Cultural Centre Trust Fund**, the **Mauritius Tamil Cultural Centre Trust Fund**, the **Mauritius Telegu Cultural Centre Trust Fund**, the **Islamic Cultural Centre Trust Fund** and the **Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund** have all been set up by statute to preserve and promote Marathi, Tamil, Telegu, Islamic and African art and culture as well as the study of the Marathi, Tamil, Telegu, Arabic, Urdu and creole languages respectively.
11. The following pieces of legislation have also been enacted to enable each community to promote their traditional values: The Hindi speaking Union Act 2002; The Urdu speaking Union Act 2002; The Roman Catholic Church Act; The Tamil Maha Sangam Act; The Arabic-Speaking Union Act 2011; The Bhojpuri-Speaking Union Act 2011; The Chinese- Speaking Union Act 2011; The Creole- Speaking Union Act 2011 and the The Sanskrit- Speaking Union Act 2011

The main object of these Acts is to trigger and carry on educational work for physical, moral, intellectual, social, cultural and religious advancement by the establishment of schools, colleges and libraries and the organization of lectures and debates. They provide facilities for extensive

exchange programs, scholarships and social intercourse with other organization at regional and international level.

12. **The National Heritage Fund**, set up under the **National Heritage Fund Act**, aims at safeguarding, managing and promoting the national heritage of Mauritius, preserving the national heritage sites as a source material for scientific and cultural investigation and as an enduring basis for the purposes of development, leisure, tourism and enjoyment of present and future generations worldwide and educating and sensitizing the public on cultural values, national heritage and instilling a sense of belonging and civic pride with respect to national heritage.