

## **Electoral Alliance Agreement between the MLP and the MMM**

The Mauritius Labour Party (MLP) and the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM) hereby agree to enter into an electoral alliance agreement for the next general elections.

The agreement outlines a framework for an inclusive and a power sharing government and states some key rules and procedures that constitute the underlying foundation of our partnership.

The agreement is structured as follows:

1. Preamble
2. The main policy content of our agreement
3. Electoral Reform
4. Constitutional modernisation and Second Republic
5. Electoral Alliance
6. Government Formation
7. Two legislative agenda priorities
8. Election of the President and the Vice-President
9. Permanent Coalition Committee
10. Conclusion

### **1. Preamble**

This document summarises the policy agenda and the core principles governing the alliance between our two parties, our shared desire to contest the next general elections together and to work in the national interest, the main objectives that would govern the coalition upon assuming power and the cooperation framework for a new Government.

It is based on a clear and coherent power sharing agreement underpinned by a strong, stable and effective government. It provides a basis to foster trust and confidence to govern the country together. We are putting national interest ahead of party interest.

## **2. The main policy content of our agreement**

The manifestoes of the MLP and the MMM have much in common with both parties committed to a progressive policy agenda. Our programme will provide for a comprehensive policy agenda aimed at increasing sustainable economic growth with shared prosperity and improving the social and economic well-being of all Mauritians and their families.

It is underpinned by eight key policy priorities as follows:

- (1) an economic agenda anchored on reigniting the engines of growth, increasing private sector and public sector investment, boosting foreign exchange earnings in the export of goods and services from both existing and emerging sectors, generating employment opportunities, consolidating and diversifying the economic base to improve resilience, enhancing productivity and sharpening competitiveness. We will also give a new spur to our savings culture so that we can finance our investment needs and thus be less dependent on foreign resources. This should also reduce our current account deficit and improve our balance of payments situation further;
- (2) a social agenda, underscoring inclusive growth and shared prosperity which will focus on a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy that recognises the multi-dimensional nature of poverty through a combination of employment, investment and reform in education, training and skills upgrading, empowerment, micro and small enterprises, self employment, incremental resources in social housing and social infrastructure, and greater professionalisation of social work;

- (3) a sustainable environmental agenda embedded on policies for energy savings, energy efficiency, and an energy mix that encourages sources that are both renewable and ecofriendly, including the use of new biomass and a reduction in greenhouse gases emission. We will support policies to move Mauritius towards a low-polluting, low-carbon economy. This will apply to both the electricity and the transport component of energy;
- (4) a development agenda to speed up the graduation of Mauritius to a high income economy with shared prosperity. We have to improve our fortunes through higher incomes, better jobs and enhanced quality of life. We shall focus on the necessary policy, structural and institutional reforms, economic adjustments and investment in physical infrastructure, human capital, technology and innovation that are imperative to accelerate the elevation of Mauritius to a high income economy with better living standards while adopting measures to ensure that the gains are fairly distributed;
- (5) a democratic agenda with a deepening and a widening of the democratic space. A strong, thriving and independent public broadcasting media service is a vital component of the fabric of any society and we are no exception. It should provide a platform for insightful, relevant and evidence-based debates on issues of public interest. It is also essential to deliver a plurality and a diversity of views in a vibrant and an informed democracy. In that context, we shall introduce a new MBC Act to reflect those core values and to provide for greater independence for public broadcasting. We shall also allow the setting up of private TV channels to foster a competitive environment;
- (6) a 'shared destiny' agenda with a consolidation of national unity and social cohesion. We have a common and a shared destiny. National unity and social cohesion are paramount to the nation's progress and development. We are quite unique in demonstrating how unity in diversity can be harnessed for nation building. These core values must be cultivated, nurtured, enhanced and

strengthened to create a climate of trust, cooperation, goodwill and understanding that is vital for stability, peace, harmony and mutual respect. We are in it together and we have to work hand in hand for the well-being of our nation. A MLP/MMM Government will create a conducive environment to foster national unity while respecting diversity and consolidating social cohesion.

- (7) an agenda against fraud and corruption. We have an unflinching commitment and determination to combat fraud and corruption and we will adopt a zero tolerance policy towards these two scourges. We shall strengthen the anti-corruption stance by adopting a comprehensive policy on the prevention, detection and remediation of fraud and corruption. In addition to more robust procedures and systems of internal control and compliance, our raft of institutional and policy measures include, amongst others, the setting up of an Independent Serious Fraud Office, the legislative control of the financing of political parties and a new Declaration of Assets Act that provides for such declaration of assets by public officials to be made public;
- (8) an agenda for transparency and governance in the conduct of the affairs of the country. We are committed to a more open, transparent, accountable and effective government to usher us into the future. We will reinforce public sector management. To that end, we will reform the governance of parastatal bodies and state-owned enterprises so as to enhance the efficiency of public spending, improve the delivery of public services, ensure the timeliness and cost-effectiveness in public sector investments and provide for greater accountability .

Both the details of the policy content referred to above and proposals and measures in other sectors and areas will be set out first in our electoral manifesto and then in the Government programme.

### **3. Electoral reform**

Our two parties have reached agreement on introducing electoral reform in Mauritius. The main features of the electoral reform agenda are to ensure government stability, to consolidate democracy, to enhance party fairness, to foster broad based socio-demographic inclusion and to promote fairer gender representation. More specifically, we have agreed as follows:

i) to retain the current FPTP formula with 20 three-member constituencies in the Island of Mauritius;

ii) to have 3 constituency MPs from Rodrigues;

to introduce 20 Party List seats so as to ensure party and gender fairness and to subsume the current BLS into a new dispensation for rainbow representation;

iii) to provide that no more than two thirds of candidates are from the same sex;

iv) to establish a minimum threshold of 10% of national votes to be eligible for Party List seats;

v) to give the option to parties to field double candidacies; and

vi) to return Party List MPs from either one single Party List or two separate Party Lists.

### **4. Constitutional modernisation and Second Republic**

Our two parties are resolved to equip Mauritius with the modern constitutional and electoral system that responds to the aspirations of future generations and allows all sections of society to participate in its success.

Therefore, we agree to introduce constitutional reform to create better checks and balances between the powers, role and responsibilities of the President and those of the Prime Minister in order to modernise and equip our Constitution for the demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

To that end, as early as possible after the next general elections, the Constitution shall be amended to provide, among other things, for effective additional powers and substantive responsibilities to be exercised by the President of the Republic, as provided for in this document and its annex.

Upon approval of this Agreement, a Committee constituting of lawyers of our two Parties supported by a panel of foreign Constitutional lawyers will draft a bill to reflect the constitutional balance of powers and responsibilities between the President and the Prime Minister as contained in this document and its annex, following which a bill will be introduced into the National Assembly as soon as possible.

(1) The President and the Vice-President of the Republic shall be elected by universal suffrage.

(2) The Prime Minister shall be appointed by the President .

#### 4(a) **Powers of the President**

There shall be close consultation between the President and the Prime Minister which will be the foundation of the success of the partnership. The powers of the President shall be broadened to include the following:

(i) The President may dissolve the National Assembly.

(ii) The President may preside the Cabinet of Ministers whenever he so decides.

(iii) The Prime Minister shall give effective consideration to any recommendation of the President to appoint and revoke a Minister.

(iv) The President, in collaboration with the Prime Minister, will be responsible for the foreign policy of Mauritius and represent Mauritius in international and other meetings.

(v) The President may address Parliament whenever he so decides.

(vi) The President shall have additional powers of appointment as per the annexed list.

#### 4(b) **Powers of the Prime Minister**

The powers, responsibilities and prerogatives of the Prime Minister shall remain as current, save for the powers referred to at para 4(a).

### **5. Electoral alliance**

Our two parties agree to enter into an electoral alliance to contest the next general elections on the following terms and conditions:

i) the 60 electoral tickets in the Island of Mauritius shall be shared equally between the two parties on a 50/50 basis; and

ii) there shall be at least one candidate of each party in each of the 20 constituencies in the Island of Mauritius (constituencies 1 to 20).

### **6. Government formation**

i) We shall present Dr Navin Ramgoolam as Prime Minister and Mr Paul Bérenger as Deputy Prime Minister for an initial period until a new bill to reflect the role powers and responsibilities of the President is introduced into the National Assembly and Dr Navin Ramgoolam resigns as Prime Minister to stand as candidate for the Office of President;

Mr Jayen Cuttaree shall be presented as Vice-Presidential candidate ;

- ii) Mr Paul Bérenger will then succeed as Prime Minister ;
- iii) With Mr Paul Bérenger as Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Minister and number 2 in the Government shall be proposed by the MLP;
- iv) The Vice-Prime Minister and the number 3 in the Government shall be proposed by the MMM;
- v) The Vice-Prime Minister and the number 4 in the government shall be proposed by the MLP;
- vi) In addition to the Prime Minister, a Cabinet with each party having 12 Ministers shall be constituted;
- vii) The two parties shall equally share the posts of PPS or Junior Ministers;
- viii) Each party shall propose its own candidates for Ministerial berths;
- ix) The Speaker of the Assembly shall be proposed by the MMM and the Deputy-Speaker by the MLP;
- x) The Attorney General shall be proposed by the MLP;
- xi) The Minister of Economy, Finance and Financial Services shall be proposed by the MLP;
- xii) There shall be a separate Ministry for Home Affairs and the Minister shall be proposed by the MLP;
- xiii) The Minister of Foreign Affairs shall be proposed by the MLP;
- xiv) The Chief Whip shall be proposed by the MMM; and

xv) There shall be effective and meaningful consultation between the President and Prime Minister in the appointment of Board members and CEO's of public institutions, para statal bodies and State Owned Enterprises.

## **7. Two legislative agenda priorities**

As early as possible after the next elections, the newly-elected Government shall enact the following two ground-breaking legislations:

- i) The Constitutional Electoral Reform Bill so as to give force of law to the new electoral system to be introduced in Mauritius; and
- ii) The Second Republic Bill that will spell out the additional powers, roles and responsibilities of the President.

## **8. Election of the President and of the Vice-President**

- i) The President and the Vice-President of the Republic shall be elected for a period of 7 years through direct popular universal suffrage on the basis of a single-round election.
- ii) The Presidential candidate and the Vice-Presidential candidate shall constitute a single slate for the Presidential elections.

## **9. Permanent Coalition Committee**

To ensure that the power sharing agreement works smoothly and that decision making in Government is effective and efficient, the two parties, in office, will establish a mechanism by way of a Permanent Coalition Committee. It will function as a joint monitoring, implementation and evaluation committee and will also act as a mechanism for resolving policy differences that may arise.

The Committee, with equal representation, will be co-chaired by one representative from each party.

## **10. Conclusion**

This is a constructive attempt to work together in an effective manner to deliver on a robust, inclusive and sustainable development agenda and to address the daunting challenges confronting our country. We have a shared desire to unite our efforts in the national interest and we want a genuine coalition government in terms of both policy and operation. Our aim in signing this document is to create a climate of mutual trust, certainty and goodwill and to strengthen and enhance our visions. In pulling our resources and energies together and combining the best ideas from our two parties' programmes, we are confident that we will take our country to better days and greater heights in a climate of stability and reassurance during a period of great economic and financial uncertainty globally. We will also unlock new opportunities that will meet the aspirations and the expectations of our fellow compatriots.

Hon Dr Navinchandra Ramgoolam  
Leader of the Mauritius Labour Party

Hon Paul Raymond Bérenger  
Leader of the Mouvement Militant  
Mauricien

**Date : 20 September 2014**