

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Anti-Corruption Policy

1.0 Background Information on the Ministry

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is the executive arm of the Government for the implementation of the foreign policy of Mauritius. It is mandated for the administration of all matters flowing from membership of the United Nations and the specialized agencies, diplomatic missions in Commonwealth and foreign countries, correspondence with representatives of Commonwealth and foreign countries accredited to Mauritius. The Ministry is currently organized as follows:

- (a) Foreign Affairs – a core part of the Ministry and is responsible for Bilateral and Multilateral conduct of relations and Negotiations and Agreement of a political and economic nature including trade;
- (b) Regional Integration Division – focuses on the formulation and coordination of policies, plans and strategies at regional level for implementation at national level; and
- (c) International Trade Division, including Industrial Property Office – responsible for the formulation of trade policies, negotiation and implementation of Trade Agreements.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is supported by a total of 19 Diplomatic Missions overseas and 1 Consulate, and a network of Honorary Consulates. The network of missions is uniquely placed to perform, on behalf of the Government of Mauritius, a diverse range of representational, promotional and assistance functions and these offices are an integral and essential tool for the delivery of the foreign policy and strategic objectives of the Ministry.

2.0 Vision

Our Vision is for “a prosperous and sustainable Republic of Mauritius fully integrated in a globalized and equitable world”.

3.0 Mission

The Ministry aims to:

- Uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Republic of Mauritius;
- Promote and safeguard the national interest of the Republic of Mauritius at bilateral, regional and international levels;
- Contribute towards building a secure, equitable and democratic international community;
- Strengthen our existing bilateral relations and forge new partnerships;
- Work towards sustainable development through the deepening and acceleration of regional integration;
- Foster inclusive and sustainable economic growth through the expansion of trade with a view to integrating the Republic of Mauritius into the global economy;
- Enhance our diplomatic network overseas for greater visibility and outreach.

4.0 Values

In carrying out the Ministry's mission, all staff are guided by the Code of Ethics and the Core Values of the organization, which are:

- Patriotism
- Integrity
- Accountability
- Excellence
- Discipline
- Transparency
- Selflessness
- Impartiality
- Team Spirit
- Dedication
- Proactive approach

5.0 Introduction

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade acknowledges that the risk of corruption is inherent and may occur in the organization. It is committed to uphold the highest level of integrity in the conduct of its affairs through the adoption of corruption prevention strategies in the organisation.

This anti-corruption policy conveys the unswerving commitment of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to detect and act against corruption and to adhere to a culture of integrity.

6.0 Statement of Intent

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade will not tolerate corrupt practices in the administration of its responsibilities, be it internal or external. The highest standards of conduct should be exhibited by staff in their interface with stakeholders and the general public. It is committed to ensuring that the risks of corruption and the resulting potential losses are curtailed.

7.0 Policy Statement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is committed to promoting and adhering to the highest standards of probity, transparency and accountability in the operations and management of the organisation. Through this policy the organisation engages itself to fully and unequivocally adopt a zero-tolerance stance towards corruption and other malpractices and shall ensure compliance with the anti-corruption legislation.

8.0 Anti-corruption Commitment

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade has signed the Anti-Corruption commitment developed by the ICAC. In so doing, it avows to avail of all resources and means to combat corruption in all its forms at all times including the application of appropriate prevention and detection control measures.

For the purpose of ensuring sound implementation of this policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade undertakes to disseminate all information, thereby ensuring that:

- Employees have sufficient knowledge concerning the anti-corruption policy and that it is applied to all undertakings.
- Adequate controls to counteract corruption are known and used within the organization.
- There are clear procedures and systems for handling suspected cases of corruption.
- All our stakeholders are aware of the organization's anti-corruption policy.

The key objective of this anti-corruption policy is to develop, strengthen and sustain a culture of integrity across the organisation. This will be achieved through:

- Ensuring that projects have clearly formulated goals, expected results as well as monitoring and follow-ups.

- Regular evaluation of corruption risks, systems and procedures.
- The setting-up of effective processes characterized by broad participation and transparency.
- Learning from experiences and continually improving organizational performance and the corporate image.

9.0 Scope and Applicability

This policy encompasses measures and practices of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade on preventing and combating corrupt, fraudulent, collusive or coercive practices in its activities and operations. This policy applies to all staff working at/with the Ministry and Mauritius Missions Overseas, (including Ambassadorial rank) and to any other parties involved either directly or indirectly with the Ministry.

10.0 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, An Act of Corruption is defined as per section 2 of the Prevention of Corruption Act as amended.

"act of corruption" -

- (a) means an act which constitutes a corruption offence; and
- (b) includes -
 - (i) any conduct whereby, in return for a gratification, a person does or neglects from doing an act in contravention of his public duties;
 - (ii) the offer, promise, soliciting or receipt of a gratification as an inducement or reward to a person to do or not to do any act, with a corrupt intention;
 - (iii) the abuse of a public or private office for private gain;
 - (iv) an agreement between 2 or more persons to act or refrain from acting in violation of a person's duties in the private or public sector for profit or gain;
 - (v) any conduct whereby a person accepts or obtains, or agrees to accept or attempts to obtain, from any person, for himself or for any other person, any gratification for inducing a public official, by corrupt or illegal means, or by the exercise of personal influence, to do or abstain from doing an act in the exercise of his duties to show favour or disfavour to any person.

All the sections of the law penalizing corruption offences are described in sections 4 to 17 of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002 as amended. These include bribery by public official, bribery of public official, taking gratification to screen an offender from punishment, public official using his office for gratification, traffic d'influence and conflict of interest.

11.0 Responsibilities for implementing the policy

The responsibility to develop and coordinate the implementation of the policy shall rest upon the Anti-Corruption Committee (ACC) established for the purpose. The ACC shall set priorities, provide advice when ethical issues arise and communicate the policy to all levels of management and staff.

The Anti-Corruption Committee - The committee shall comprise of members from both operational and support departments of the institution.

The person identified by the organisation shall lead the project and chair all meetings. The ACC shall be responsible for coordinating and implementing the anti-corruption policy. It shall develop a time-bound programme with clear and precise deliverables and related budget and execute it once approved by top management. The organisation shall designate an officer to act as Secretary to the Committee.

The committee shall meet on a regular basis, preferably every month or as decided by the Chairperson of the ACC. The Chair shall decide upon the setting up of sub-committees to assist the ACC in the implementation of any initiatives decided by the ACC.

Role of Management - It is the responsibility of directors and managers to promote the anti-corruption policy within their areas of operation. Managers are expected to actively deter, prevent and detect corruption by maintaining effective control systems and ensuring that their staff are familiar with the policy.

Role of Employees – Each employee shall read, be familiar with and strictly comply with the policy. The organisation shall ensure that each employee is provided with a copy of this policy or otherwise has on-line access.

Role of Internal Audit – The Internal Audit has the responsibility to ensure the effectiveness and adequacy of the Internal Control System in place. It should ensure that system is subject to regular audit to provide assurance that they are effective in countering corruption opportunities.

12.0 The Anti-Corruption Policy

All staff are required to adhere to the policy. It sets down the standards of behavior, conduct and level of professionalism expected from one and all staff members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the delivery of services.

Organisational Culture and Personal Behaviour

Members of staff should **not**

- (a) indulge in any conduct whereby in return of a gratification he either does or neglect doing something contrary to his duties.
- (b) offer to someone or promise or solicit a gratification from anyone.
- (c) make abuse of his/her office for private gain.
- (d) adopt any conduct whereby he/she accepts or obtain any gratification either for himself or herself from anyone.
- (e) engage in nepotism and favouritism.
- (f) take actions and decisions which are influenced by self-interest, personal gain and other improper motives.
- (g) digress at any time to carry out their duties professionally and ethically.
- (h) be involved in situations of actual or potential conflict of interests. Further, they should disclose in writing any situation of conflict of interests and not vote or take part in any proceedings in relation to that situation of conflict of interests.

It is to be noted that Mauritius actively supports the international fight against corruption (Ratification of the UN Convention against Corruption, the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption and the SADC Protocol against Corruption). Mauritius has the moral obligation to comply with the provisions of these Conventions/Protocol.

In our quest for openness and transparency towards the general public, the website of Ministry/Mission provides links to *“How and To whom to Report irregularities”*.

13.0 Risk Assessment

The organisation is conscious that the risk of corruption may occur in every sphere of its activities and may evolve in the light of changing circumstances and working environment. In its endeavour to proactively address risks of corruption, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade shall ensure that a proper risk management process is in place. Risk assessment should focus on a thorough analysis of the functional activities in close collaboration with officers involved in the process with a view to identifying potential or actual corruption risk areas. With respect to risk identified necessary corruption prevention measures including policies and procedures would be developed to address the risks. The responsibility to plan, coordinate and monitor the risk management process rests with the ACC.

14.0 Handling and reporting corruption

Reporting suspected cases of corruption - Notwithstanding Section 44(1) of the Prevention of Corruption Act 2002 as amended which provides that where an officer of a public body suspects that an act of corruption has been committed within or in relation to that public body, he **shall** forthwith make a written report to the ICAC, the organisation shall put in place measures that shall facilitate the reporting of suspected cases.

S 45 of the PoCA as amended provides that where in the exercise of his functions, the chief executive of a public body is of the opinion that an act of corruption may have occurred, he may refer to the ICAC for investigation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade may set up a committee to assist the Secretary for Foreign Affairs in determining whether there is reasonable doubt for suspicion of corruption prior to referral of the case to the ICAC for investigation.

Confidentiality - Information pertaining to complaints shall not be disclosed to any unauthorised party

15.0 Protection of whistleblowers

There will be no reprisal by management against “the public official” who in good faith reports an act of corruption or malpractice or suspected illegal and dishonest activity or any activity that he/she has witnessed. However, disciplinary actions may be taken against any person who knowingly had made false allegations.

16.0 Disciplinary measures

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade is committed to ensuring that this policy is duly implemented in the organisation.

Disciplinary measures in accordance with established procedures will be taken against any staff who is found guilty of a breach of the provisions contained in this policy.

17.0 Training and Communications

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade recognises that the success and credibility of this policy depends on effective training, communications and the awareness of directors and employees throughout the organisation. Management should ensure that the anti-corruption policy is clearly disseminated to all staff and that its contents are understood.

18.0 Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually or earlier if necessary or in the event of any changes in the laws and regulations that are relevant to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. The Chairperson of the ACC should recommend the review to the Board or Chief Executive as applicable.