



Annual Report on Performance

Fiscal Year 2020/2021
(01 July 2020 – 30 June 2021)

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

THE ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 21

The Annual Report 2020-2021 on Performance of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration & International Trade has been prepared in accordance with the statutory requirements of Section 4B of the Finance & Audit Act.

The Report provides information on the Ministry, its financial performance and achievements, the targets set out relative to the resources approved by the National Assembly, as well we as the strategic direction to be adopted for the next three years.

The information provided in this Annual Report is intended for our stakeholders and the public at large.

PART I Overview of the Ministry

PART II Achievements and Challenges

PART III Financial Performance

PART IV Way Forward

This Report is divided into four parts:

Part I: About the Ministry

Part I outlines the vision, mission, role and functions of the Ministry. It gives a brief overview of its organizational structure including a Gender Statement demonstrating our approach to tackle gender issues.

Part II: Main Achievements

Part II describes the achievements and a review of how the Ministry has performed during the previous year, including the Key Performance Indicators. This section also provides the actions and system put in place in relation to risk management, citizen-oriented initiatives and good governance.

Part III: Financial Performance

Part III provides the financial highlights for the previous year and includes statements of revenue and expenditure.

Part IV: Way Forward

Part IV provides the strategic directions to realise the Office's vision, objectives and desired outcomes.

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Statement of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

It is with great pleasure that I present the Annual Report on Performance for the Financial Year ending June 2021 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade.

This Report comes at a time of unprecedented challenges posed by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic to our society and economy. Despite the hurdles, the Ministry has continued to promote the national interest of the Republic of Mauritius at all levels.

During the period under review, the Ministry has worked closely with other friendly countries for the provision and procurement of COVID-19 vaccines. We have engaged with the African Union and the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention in the Continent's collective efforts to address the challenges posed by the pandemic.

On the regional front, we facilitated the supply of medical supplies from the Indian Ocean Commission. Funds from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) were made available to enhance our local production capacity for Personal Protective Equipment, masks and face shields, while the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) developed an online platform on the availability of essential goods in the region.

My Ministry has successfully pursued the repatriation exercise of stranded Mauritian worldwide, which initially started in January 2020 with the stranded students based in Wuhan and other parts of China.

On another note, the Ministry's persistent engagement on regional, continental and international fronts has led to concrete progress in a number of trade agreements including the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with India, the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China, and the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

Indeed, January 2021 saw the entry into force of the FTA with China, the country's first Trade Agreement with an African country which provides for the deepening of economic and trade relations between our two countries.

In addition, following a long period of negotiation, the CECPA was successfully signed in January 2021 and has been operational since April 2021.

My Ministry is further consolidating our relationship with Africa through the AfCFTA Agreement. As a member of the African Union, Mauritius participated in the various meetings and conferences organised by the AU Commission and its agencies. We have also facilitated the implementation of the Agenda 2063, the blue print for the socio-economic transformation of Africa – *Building The Africa We Want*.

The Ministry's engagement on the regional and continental fronts has led to concrete progress in a number of Memorandum of Understandings (MOUs) and Agreements signed with Regional Organisations and co-operating partners like the European Union, the African Development Bank, GIZ-Germany, and l'Agence Française de Développement.

The Ministry has worked in close collaboration with the relevant stakeholders to ensure that Mauritius is removed, ahead of schedule, from the FATF greylist by providing the necessary support in our lobbying efforts to show that Mauritius complies with all international AML/CFT standards.

With a view to increasing our footprint on the regional and international front, the Ministry lobbied successfully for the election of several Mauritians candidates. Moreover, we have been fully engaged in coordinating the preparations for the participation of Mauritius in the Dubai Expo 2020.

I would like to conclude by expressing my gratitude to all the staff at the Ministry and in our Missions overseas for their continued support and commitment during these dire times.

The Honorable Alan Ganoo

*Minister of Foreign Affairs,
Regional Integration and
International Trade.*

Accounting Officer's Statement

Financial year 2020-2021 has been particularly challenging in view of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its ensuing consequences.

This Ministry has swiftly responded to these challenges, and has been in the forefront of the actions of the Government in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. We led the repatriation of stranded Mauritians abroad following the closure of borders in Mauritius and many other countries.

In these dire times, we have sought assistance from friendly countries, regional and international organisations such as the United Nations and the World Health Organisation (WHO), for the donation and shipping of vaccines and medical supplies to assist in the fight against the COVID 19.

Throughout the period under review, the Ministry has nurtured strong relationships with our development partners. The Ministry has also held several bilateral meetings and facilitated high level engagements, through video conferencing for the major part.

Mauritius successfully finalized and signed the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with India, a landmark agreement in the history of bilateral relations between Mauritius and India, which offers numerous opportunities for Mauritian businesses.

The CECPA, the first Agreement concluded by India with an African country, also has a regional dimension in the light of growing interest among Indian businesses to access opportunities on the African Continent.

The entry into force of the Mauritius-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA) on 01 January 2021 is another seminal achievement. China is a market of some 1,4 billion people hence representing a wide array of opportunities in trade in goods and trade in services for the local business community.

With the CECPA and the Mauritius/China FTA, Mauritius aims to position itself as a gateway for investment and trade to mainland Africa. The Ministry is working in close collaborating with all relevant stakeholders to develop a coordinated strategy that would allow Mauritius to tap opportunities under these agreements.

I also wish to highlight the historic achievement of african countries, that is the entry into force of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) on 1st January of this year. This important agreement will undoubtedly act as a nexus along the India-Africa and the China-Africa Trade Corridor by opening up trade and investment opportunities for Mauritius on a much larger market of 1.3 billion consumers.

On the regional front, the Ministry has actively pursued the coordination and monitoring of projects, programmes, policies and activities of regional organisations to which Mauritius

belongs. We are in the process of revamping our strategies in light of the changing needs of the region and re-orienting our action plan so as to focus on priority areas of cooperation such as health, climate change, ocean economy and maritime security.

In its last budget, the Government proposed various bold measures which will play a pivotal role in the acceleration of the digitalization process of the public sector with the objective of facilitating and enhancing the livelihood of our citizens. For a small vulnerable island state like Mauritius, we have no other option than to harness digital technologies and adopt new ways of delivering our services effectively. We are therefore taking the necessary steps to move incrementally towards a fully digitalized Ministry.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to all the staff of the Ministry and in our overseas Missions for their hard work and commitment to duty during these difficult and challenging times, as well as our foreign stakeholders for their close collaboration.

Ambassador H. Dillum

Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Our Vision

A prosperous and sustainable Republic of Mauritius fully integrated in a globalised and equitable world.

Our Mission

- Uphold the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Republic of Mauritius;
- Promote and safeguard the national interest of 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.

Role and functions of the Ministry

The portfolio of this Ministry comprises the administration of all matters flowing from: -

- (a) membership of the United Nations and the specialised agencies, diplomatic missions in Commonwealth and foreign countries, correspondence with representatives of Commonwealth and foreign countries accredited to Mauritius, Treaties, Conventions and Protocols;
- (b) International Trade, including all trade and trade-related matters flowing from membership of Regional and International Organisations, Bilateral, Plurilateral and Multilateral Trade Negotiations and Agreements, and the Industrial Property Office.
- (c) Implementation of programmes and projects of COMESA, IOC, IORA and SADC through coordination at national and regional levels

Our Responsibilities are to: -

- Ensure that the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Mauritius are safeguarded in all regional and international fora;
- Conduct our international relations and foreign policy with a view to promoting and safeguarding the interest of Mauritius and, in this respect, to represent and position Mauritius internationally;
- Deal with all matters pertaining to the conduct and administration of foreign affairs, regional integration and international trade, including all trade and trade-related matters, patents and trademarks;
- Act as the focal point of Government in its interactions with foreign governments and regional and international organisations;
- Raise awareness of the benefits to be derived from bilateral, regional and international instruments;
- Act as the depository of all bilateral, regional and international treaties, conventions, protocols and agreements; and
- Provide consular service and assistance as appropriate.

The Ministry comprises three divisions, namely:

- Foreign Affairs Division,
- Regional Integration Division, and
- International Trade Division, including the Industrial Property Office.

The Ministry is supported by 19 Diplomatic Missions overseas and 2 Consulates in Mumbai and Dubai, as well as a network of Honorary Consulates. The network of missions caters, on behalf of the Government of Mauritius, for a diverse range of representational and promotional assistance functions as well as providing assistance in the execution of its mandate as per its portfolio.

Senior Management Team (from 01 July 2020 to 30 June 2021)

Title / Directorate	Contact Details
Secretary for Foreign Affairs	Ambassador Mr H. Dillum Phone :(230) 405- 2541 Fax: (230) 212-5507 Email: sfa@govmu.org
Permanent Secretary	Mrs. S. Lotun Phone :(230) 405- 2523 Fax: (230) 212-2043 Email: psmfa@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, Protocol, Courtesy Calls Accreditation	Mr A. Hurree Phone :(230) 405- 2539 Fax: (230) 211-3242 Email: ahurree@govmu.org protocol@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, EU, Europe, Russia Directorate	Mr S.N. Udaiyan Phone :(230) 405- 2517 Fax: (230) 212-5914 Email: sudaiyan@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, Bilateral Africa Directorate	Mrs. G. Mootoosamy Phone :(230) 405- 2693 Fax: (230) 212- 8331 Email: gmootoosamy@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, IGOs Political Directorate	Mr R. Bhuckory Phone :(230) 405- 2563 Fax: (230) 212- 5496 Email: rakbb@hotmail.com
Minister Counsellor and Head Africa Union Directorate	Mr K Jingree Phone :(230) 405- 2612 Fax: (230) 212 5702 Email: kjingree@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head Asia and Middle East Directorate	Mr. N. Chedumbarum Phone: (230) 405 2505

Minister Counsellor	Mrs. M. H. Chavrimootoo Phone: (230) 405 2500
Minister Counsellor and Head IGOs Economic Directorate	Mr. R. Sawmy Phone: (230) 405- 2659 Email: vsawmy@govmu.org
Ambassador and Head Commonwealth, OIF, Americas, Australasia and Sovereignty Issues Directorate	Ambassador V. Mungur Phone :(230) 405- 2565 Fax: (230) 210 6473 Email: protocol@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, Policy Coherence, Coordination Drafting Directorate	Mr D. P Gokulsing Phone :(230) 405- 2619 Fax: (230) 212 5702 Email: dgokulsing@govmu.org
Minister Counsellor and Head, IGOs Political -Geneva and the Hague Related Issues	Mr. R. Sookun Phone :(230) 405- 2526 Email: rsookun@yahoo.com
Minister Counsellor and Head Digital Transformation, Communication & Capacity Development Directorate	Mr N. Jagarnath Phone: 405- 2571 Email: njagarnath@govmu.org
Director, Regional Integration Division	Mrs. M. Dabee-Hauzaree Phone :(230) 405- 2623 Fax: (230) 213-7672 Email: mdabee-hauzaree@govmu.org
Director, Trade Policy, International Trade Division	Mr. N. Boodhoo Phone :(230) 260 2911 Fax: (230) 212-6368 Email: sunilboodhoo59@gmail.com
Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs. D. Takoory Phone: (230) 405- 2516 Fax: (230) 212 3957 Email: dtakoory@govmu.org

Deputy Permanent Secretary	Mrs. N. D. Goolooa Phone: (230) 405- 2528 Fax: (230) 2123957 Email: ngoolaooa@govmu.org
Ag. Controller, Industrial Property Office	Mr. Ranjive Beergaunot Phone: (230) 260 2811 Fax: 210 9702 Email: rbeergaunot@govmu.org

Mission Overseas (Embassies, High Commissions, Permanent Representatives and Consulates)

SN	MISSION	COUNTRY	E-MAIL AND TELEPHONE NO	TIME DIFFERENCE WITH MAURITIUS
1	ADDIS ABABA*	ETHIOPIA	ADDISEMB@GOVMU.ORG 25111 661 5997	-1 HOUR
2	ANTANANARIVO*	MADAGASCAR	MEMAD@MOOV.MG 261 20 22 538 42 / 44	-1 HOUR
3	BEIJING*	CHINA	MEBJ@GOVMU.ORG 86 10 6532 5695 (EMBASSY) 86 10 6532 5698 (CONSULAR SECTION)	+4 HOURS
4	BERLIN*	GERMANY	BERLIN@MAURITIUS-EMBASSY.DE 49 30 26 39 3610 (CONSULAR SECTION)	-3 HOURS (WINTER) -2 HOURS (SUMMER)
5	BRUSSELS*	BELGIUM	BRUSSESEMB@GOVMU.ORG 32 2733 9988	-2 HOURS (SUMMER) -3 HOURS (WINTER)
6	CAIRO*	EGYPT	CAIROEMB@GOVMU.ORG 202 2736 5208/9	-2 HOURS
7	CANBERRA***	AUSTRALIA	CANBERRAHC@GOVMU.ORG 612 6281 1203 612 6282 4436	+6 HOURS (WINTER) +7 HOURS (SUMMER)
8	DUBAI	DUBAI	INFO@MAURITIUSCONSULATE.COM 971 4 3429896	NIL

9	GENEVA**	SWITZERLAND	GENEVAMIS@GOVMU.ORG 41 22 734 8550	-3 HOURS (SUMMER) -2 HOURS (WINTER)
10	ISLAMABAD***	PAKISTAN	ISLAMABADHC@GOVMU.ORG 92 51 282 4657/8 92 51 282 8985(CONSULAR SECTION)	+1 HOUR
11	KUALA LUMPUR** *	MALAYSIA	KLHC@GOVMU.ORG 603 2163 6301/06 603 2162 3941	+4 HOURS
12	LONDON** *	UK	LONDONHC@GOVMU.ORG 44 207 581 0294/95	-4 HOURS (WINTER) -3 HOURS (SUMMER)
13	MAPUTO*	MOZAMBIQUE	MAPUTO@GOVMU.ORG 258 2149 4182 258 2149 4624	-2 HOURS
14	MOSCOW*	RUSSIA	MOSCOW_EMB@GOVMU.ORG 7495 915 7617/0492	NIL
15	MUMBAI CONSULATE	INDIA	MUMBAICONS@GOVMU.ORG 91-22 2284 1410 (CONSUL'S OFFICE)	+1.5 HOURS
16	NEW DELHI***	INDIA	MHCNEWDELHI@GMAIL.COM 91 11 2410 2161/62	+L.5 HOURS
17	NEW YORK**	USA	NEWYORKMIS@GOVMU.ORG	-9 HOURS (WINTER)

			1 212 949 0190/0259	-8HOURS (SUMMER)
18	PARIS*	FRANCE	PARISEMB@GOVMU.ORG 331 42 27 30 19 (EMBASSY) 331 42 27 99 50 (CONSULAR SECTION)	-2HRS (SUMMER) -3HRS (WINTER)
19	PRETORIA* **	SOUTH AFRICA	PRETORIAHC@GOVMU.ORG 27 12 342 1283/4	-2 HOURS
20	RIYADH*	SAUDI ARABIA	EMB.RIYADH@GOVMU.ORG 966 11 482 9567/ 9591	-1 HOUR
21	WASHINGTON*	USA	MAURITIUS.EMBASSY@VE RIZON.NET 1-202-244 1491/2	-9 HOURS (WINTER) -8 HOURS (SUMMER)

Note:

- *Embassy
- **Permanent Representation
- ***High Commission

Gender Policy Statement

The Ministry advocated gender equality in its strategies and objectives. It revisited its values from a gender equality perspective to foster gender-equitable work-life integration, and to ensure commitment and coherence in our policy objectives and sustainable development goals.

Gender mainstreaming activities 2020/2021

The Ministry had proposed to set up a gym during period 2020/2021, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and other pressing issues of repatriation of stranded Mauritian overseas, the Ministry could not complete the project.

To address the challenge of Gender Based Violence, the MOFARIIT collaborates with other Ministries in the High Level Committee on the Elimination of Gender Based Violence chaired by the Hon. Prime Minister.

MOFARIIT is involved in the Technical Working Group 2 substrategy component 2 of the National Strategy and Action Plan, and is the lead agency to offer training on international conventions relating to Gender Based Violence (GBV).

In this regard, the Ministry has organised two training workshops on the topic of GBV during the current year. Around 100 participants from the public sector, private sector, NGOs and trade unions attended the workshops which aimed at creating awareness/sensitisation on the international conventions, the current legislation and policies, the domestication of conventions in our legal framework relating to GBV.

About Our People

The Secretary for Foreign Affairs, as the Responsible Officer, is accountable for the sound administration and management of the Ministry and all the Mauritius Missions Overseas.

He/She is assisted by the Permanent Secretary and officers of the Administrative cadre, officers from the Diplomatic Cadre – both at the Ministry and in our overseas diplomatic missions – Analysts (Cooperation) and Trade Policy Analysts, Manager Human Resource, Manager Financial Operations and Acting Manager Procurement and Supply.

The role and functions of the diplomatic and administrative staff are geared towards ensuring delivery of services in respect to the implementation of foreign, regional integration and trade policies as laid down by Government.

Brief overview of the operational/functional areas

The activities the General Administration section comprises the following:

Finance and Budgeting – Working out the budget proposals, monitoring of expenditure, maintaining of accounting records, ensuring follow-up on internal and external audit reports, and implementation of budget measures, among others.

Human Resources Management – Coordinating and implementing all aspects which relate to the management of human resources, conditions of service, staff relations, training and development.

Procurement and Supply – Conducting procurement exercises in line with public procurement legislations, ensuring maximum value for money.

Confidential and Open Registries – Ensuring the proper management of correspondence, files and documents and records within the Ministry.

Operation of Mission overseas – Arrangement for the departure and return of staff posted overseas, payment of allowances and grants, process of all expenditures and procurement above USD 100,000.

Each Directorate is usually headed by either an Ambassador, a Minister Counsellor. The functional role of the Directorates is briefly highlighted.

The **Bilateral Directorates** are responsible for overseeing relations of Mauritius with other States on a bilateral basis. They deal mainly with government-to-government relations in all their relevant dimensions. This includes, as circumstances may require, enhancement of bilateral connections and development cooperation, negotiations of agreements, security issues and managing the position of Mauritius in situations where internal developments in another country or region may affect our interests.

The **Political Directorates** deal with multilateral political issues and activities relating to regional and international organisations comprising inter-alia the United Nations, the African Union, “Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie”, and the Non-Aligned Movement.

The **Protocol Directorate** facilitates visits by Heads of States, Heads of Government and guests of the Government of Mauritius. It provides protocol support and courtesies during such visits. It acts as an interface for the coordination of all administrative arrangements, including the preparation of official programmes, requests for airport facilities for VIPs on arrival and departure and assigning Protocol Officers. It also addresses important consular matters, particularly in respect of Mauritian nationals abroad and foreigners proposing to visit Mauritius for various reasons.

The IGOs **Economic Directorate** focuses on current and emerging economic issues at the national, regional and international levels. One of the objectives of the Directorate is to preserve and enhance the economic interests of Mauritius at all levels. It also coordinates the activities of the different stakeholders while they engage with our traditional and non-traditional economic partners. In view of the fact that Mauritius cannot rely solely on domestic mobilization, this Directorate also works towards reaching out for assistance in the form of technical assistance and capacity building from international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF.

The Directorate also deals with the political aspects of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). It also follows closely, developments in the Financial Services sector, in particular the efforts of Mauritius to exit the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) greylist and the EU blacklist and the continued efforts of Mauritius to be fully **compliant** with International AML/CFT standards. In this respect, the Directorate also participates in the meetings of the Eastern and Southern Africa Anti- Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) which is the regional style body of the FATF. The Directorate participates in the efforts to promote Mauritius as an investment destination as well as a crucial hub for regional and international trade taking advantage of our preferential market access in Europe, Africa, Asia and USA.

The **IGO Political I Directorate** deals with a wide range of multilateral issues, including peace and security, international terrorism, sustainable development, Climate Change, and Maritime Issues and election of Mauritius experts to the UN. It focuses on the work of the United Nations (UN) System.

The **IGOs Political (Geneva and the Hague Related Issues)** forms part of the Multilateral Political Directorate of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, created in May 2021. It deals with a wide range of multilateral issues, including world health, labour, human rights, peace and security, international terrorism, sustainable development and migration, amongst others. It focuses on the United Nations (UN) System, such as the UN Principal Organs, UN Subsidiary Bodies, Programmes and Funds, Functional Commissions, Specialised Agencies , Human Rights and Human Rights Treaty Bodies; and UN 3rd Committee. The directorate also handles issues pertaining to the Hague-based institutions, as well as the International Criminal Court and the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

The **Bilateral Africa Directorate** oversees the economic, social and political relations between Mauritius and 54 African countries. It is responsible, inter-alia, for the conclusion of MoUs/Agreements, the establishment of Special economic zones in Africa, the holding of Joint Commissions, the organisation of State visits to and from Africa, and the monitoring of political developments in African countries that may impact our national interests.

The **African Union Directorate** is responsible for promoting and defending the interests of Mauritius in the African Union through participation in meetings, programmes and events of the Union and its agencies. It contributes in the formulation of strategies geared towards the socio-economic development of Africa, including Mauritius. It coordinates the implementation of policies/decisions of the African Union with line Ministries. It deals with the Africa-Asia Rural Development Organization (AARDO) which focuses on the livelihood and sustainability in rural communities and the African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO) which serves as an advisory body in the field of international law and cooperation for Asia and Africa.

The **European Union, Bilateral Europe and Russia Directorate** is responsible for overseeing relations of Mauritius with the European Union at a multilateral level and relations with the European countries and Russia on a bilateral basis. It deals with the European Union on matters related to trade and economic diplomacy. It aims at consolidating existing economic and development cooperation relations with the European Union and the Organisation of African Caribbean and Pacific (OACPS). The Directorate is *inter-alia* engaged in the post-Cotonou Partnership Agreement process, the Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI) of the EU and the discussions pertaining to fisheries agreement with the European Union. This directorate also deals with government-to-government relations with the European countries and Russia in all their relevant dimensions. This includes, as circumstances may require, enhancement of bilateral networks and development cooperation, negotiations of agreements and managing the position of Mauritius in situations where internal developments in another country or region may affect our interests.

As part of the advancement of Mauritius' international strategic, security and economic interests including through enhanced bilateral, regional and multilateral engagements, **the Directorate for the Americas Australasia, Commonwealth, Francophonie and Sovereignty Issues** handles, in the main, the following issues:

- **Bilateral:** processing all relevant political, trade political, commercial and economic, and development cooperation issues in respect of all the countries covered within the geographic zones of Americas and Australasia. This includes consolidating and expanding

our multifaceted relations with traditional partners (United States, Australia and Canada) and also developing and promoting mutually beneficial partnerships and active cooperation programmes with newer partners;

- **Multilateral:** processing of existing and emerging issues covered by the Commonwealth and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and their respective bodies. The objective is to maintain and further develop our ongoing engagements with these two important multilateral organisations in recognition of *inter alia* (a) the role that Mauritius can and should play in contributing to advocacy and responses by these organisations to adequately address both the specific interests and concerns of small island developing states (SIDS) and like-minded countries in respect of their respective economic growth and sustainable development strategies; and (b) the need to enhance the international connections of -and goodwill towards- Mauritius and leverage these for development purposes; and
- **Sovereignty:** processing, in consultation with the PMO, of all matters relating to the effective exercise of Mauritius of its sovereignty over Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin.

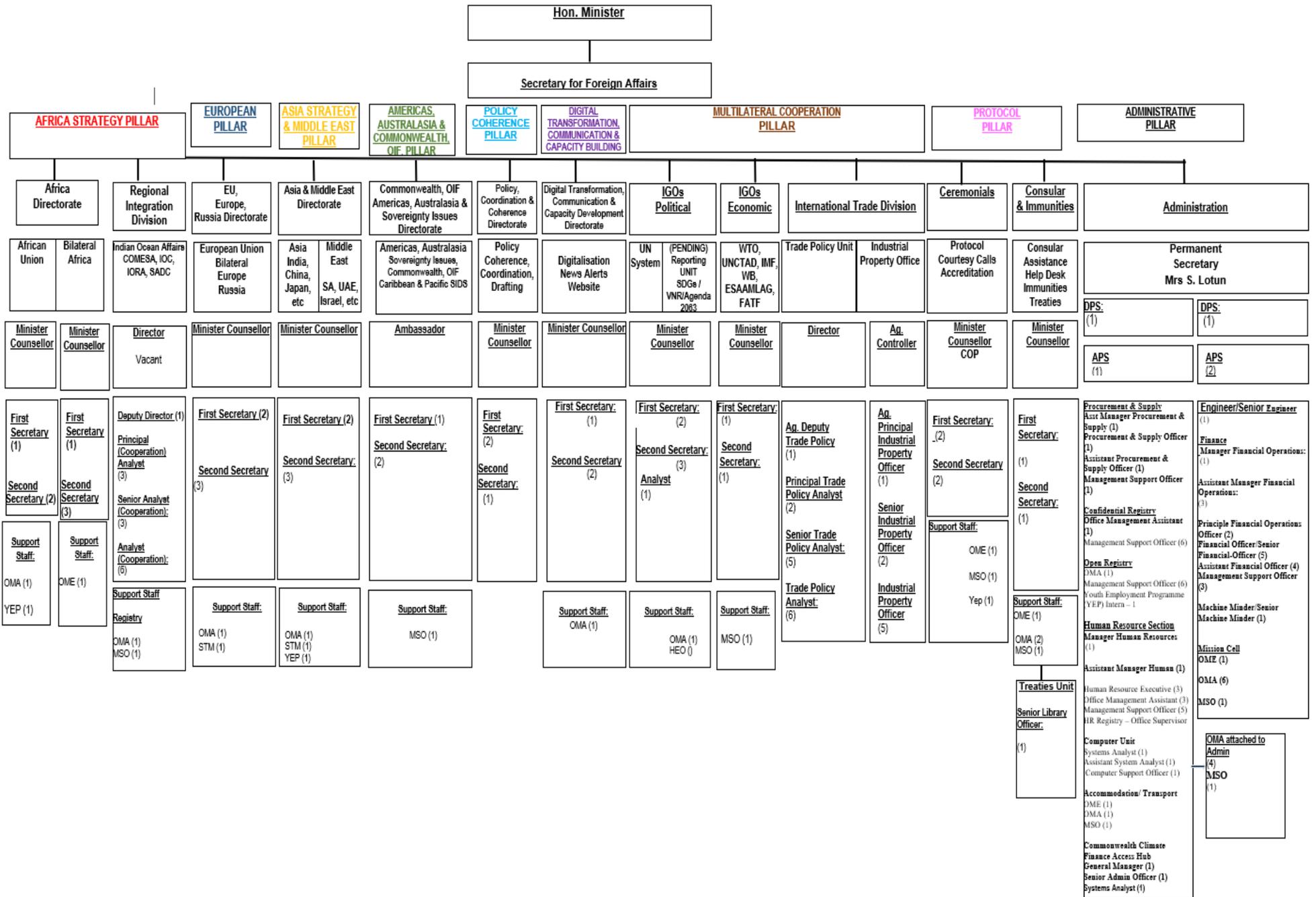
The **Digital, Transformation, Communication and Capacity Development Directorate** (DCTCCD) is at the heart of Ministry's outreach and communication strategy. It is responsible for the timely and effective access and dissemination of current, relevant and quality information to the diplomatic staff, to our Missions Abroad and to the public at large. Such information is used to support debate, research and decision-making on diplomatic issues. Up to date information is posted on our website for the benefit of the public and our diaspora. This Directorate is also mandated to overview the digital transformation of the Ministry through the implementation of the Electronic Document Management System. It liaises with the Sections concerned (Administration, IT and Procurement) and provide information to initiate and support such implementation. As the key Directorate for communication and outreach, the DTCCD is responsible to conduct regular awareness sessions through presentations, brainstorming and discussions on various themes of relevance to our diplomatic staff as well as to the support staff, be in Administration or HR. Presentations on digital transformation including EDMS, HRMIS and EHR are geared towards Support and HR Staff to enable them to familiarise with the EDMS project.

The **Regional Integration Division** is mainly responsible for driving the regional integration Agenda of Government. It formulates, co-ordinates and ensures the implementation of the policies, programmes and projects of the Southern African Development Community, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa, the Indian Ocean Commission and the Indian Ocean Rim Association at the national level. The Division also contributes to African continental integration issues from a regional perspective. With time, the Division has witnessed an expansion in the scope of its activities. It has also been given the responsibility for Indian Ocean Issues and is the Focal Point of the Ministry for Maritime Security Issues. It contributes to the policy briefs of all Directorates of the Ministry as well as to those of line Ministries.

The **International Trade Division**, which also includes the Industrial Property Office, is responsible for the following for the formulation of trade policies. The Division is responsible for negotiations on trade deals for Mauritius at the multilateral level, as well as in the context of regional and bilateral trade relations. It also ensures that international trade rules are shaped in a manner so as to create better trading opportunities for Mauritian exporters on international, regional and individual markets, and follows up on implementation of trade agreements. In addition, the International Trade Division is responsible for investigating applications for trade remedy actions, and for preparing the Trade Policy Review of Mauritius.

The **Industrial Property Office (IPO)** administers the Industrial Property legislations, registers and protects industrial property rights, namely, patents, industrial designs and trademarks, and helps in the dissemination of information on the importance of Industrial Property Rights.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade



Overseas Missions - The Ministry is present in various parts of the world through a network of 19 Diplomatic Missions and two Consulates General. These overseas Missions, as integral parts of the Ministry, are headed by an Ambassador/High Commissioner or a Consul as appropriate, and are the very first public windows of Mauritius in the host countries.

The Missions and Consulates are as follows: -

- 1) Mauritius Embassy, Addis Ababa
- 2) Mauritius Embassy, Antananarivo
- 3) Mauritius Embassy, Beijing
- 4) Mauritius Embassy, Berlin
- 5) Mauritius Embassy, Brussels
- 6) Mauritius Embassy, Cairo
- 7) Mauritius High Commission, Canberra
- 8) Consulate of Mauritius, Dubai
- 9) Mauritius Embassy and Permanent Mission to the United Nations, Geneva
- 10) Mauritius High Commission, Islamabad
- 11) Mauritius High Commission, Kuala Lumpur
- 12) Mauritius High Commission, London
- 13) Mauritius High Commission, Maputo
- 14) Mauritius Embassy, Moscow
- 15) Consulate of Mauritius, Mumbai
- 16) Mauritius High Commission, New Delhi
- 17) Permanent Mission of Mauritius to the United Nations, New York
- 18) Mauritius Embassy, Paris
- 19) Mauritius High Commission, Pretoria
- 20) Mauritius Embassy, Riyadh
- 21) Mauritius Embassy, Washington D.C.

The grades and number of staff of the Ministry for financial year 2020/21 are as follows:

GRADE	NUMBER OF STAFF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIVISION	
Secretary for Foreign Affairs	1
Permanent Secretary	1
Ambassador	19
Minister Counsellor/Deputy High Commissioner	17
Adviser (contract)	3
Deputy Permanent Secretary	1
First Secretary	24
Second Secretary	43
Assistant Permanent Secretary	3
Engineer/Senior Engineer (Civil)	1
Human Resources Cadre	5
Financial Operations Cadre	13
Procurement Cadre	3
Senior Library Officer	1
General Services Cadre	111
Machine Minder	1
Internal Control	2
IT Unit	3
Interns under Service to Mauritius Programme	2
Drivers	13
Stores Attendant	1
REGIONAL INTEGRATION COOPERATION	
Director, Cooperation	1
Deputy Director, Cooperation	1 (Vacant)
Analyst (Regional Cooperation Cadre)	12
INTERNATIONAL TRADE DIVISION	
Director, Trade Policy	1

Deputy Permanent Secretary	1
Assistant Permanent Secretary	1
Analyst (Trade Policy Cadre)	15
Controller Industrial Property Office (Acting)	1
Industrial Property Cadre	10
Trade Policy Information Officer	1
Human Resources Cadre	1
Financial Operations Cadre	2
General Services Cadre	30
Driver	2
Total	347

PART II – ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES DURING FINANCIAL YEAR 2020/21

Major Achievements during fiscal year 2020/21

1. African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA)

The AfCFTA came into force on 30th May 2019 and preferential trade under the Agreement started on 01 January 2021. The AfCFTA represents a market of 1.3 billion people with a combined gross domestic product (GDP) valued at US\$3.4 trillion.

Mauritius is able to have preferential access on new markets, especially on the western and Northern Africa for products whereby rules of origin have already been agreed.

The AfCFTA provides opportunities for foreign businesses to establish their processing plants in Mauritius and benefit from preferential rules of origin under the AfCFTA Agreement to export on the African market. Our Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will also have opportunities to expand in Africa and exploit the opportunities in the continent's growing economies.

With the ongoing negotiations on Trade in Services, Cross-border investment from Mauritius in various services sector such as ICT, Financial Services, Health and educational services, amongst others will be further enhanced. Mauritian professionals too would be able to offer their services either as independent professionals or through commercial establishments in Africa.

2. CECPA

The Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA), between Mauritius and India, signed on 22 February this year, is operational as from 1 April 2021.

The Agreement has three key components namely: Trade in Goods, Trade in Services and General Economic Cooperation. Mauritian exporters are having preferential market access on a list of 615 products including inter-alia, special sugar, canned tuna, alcoholic beverages, and garments. Mauritius, on the other hand, is providing access on 310 products, including products such as spices, tea, plastic articles, wooden furniture, parts of motor vehicles, amongst others. On trade in services, Mauritius will have access on some 94 service sectors, including professional services, business services, financial services and telecommunications services.

3. Mauritius-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA)

The Mauritius-China FTA came into force on 01 January 2021. The FTA comprises four main components which pertain to trade in goods, trade in services, investment and economic cooperation.

With regard to trade in goods, Mauritius benefits from duty-free access on the Chinese market on 7,504 tariff lines. Tariffs on an additional 723 tariff lines will be phased out over a 5 to 7-year period starting on 01 January 2021. In addition, a Tariff Rate Quota for 50,000 tonnes of sugar is being implemented on a progressive basis over a period of 8 years with an initial quantity of 15,000 tonnes.

With respect to trade in services, both parties have agreed to remove restrictions in more than 100 service sectors. These include financial services, telecommunications, Information and Communications Technology, professional services, construction and health services.

4. SADC Trade Related Facility (TRF)

Mauritius has benefitted from a financial envelope of EUR 1.4 million from the EU under the SADC Trade Related Facility to implement commitments made under the SADC FTA. Being the TRF Focal Point, Ministry has ensured proper coordination with all relevant national public/private sector stakeholders and beneficiaries and is overseeing implementation of all projects and activities. The TRF Programme will come to an end by March 2022.

5. Dubai Expo 2020

The Ministry is coordinating the preparations for the Mauritius participation in Dubai Expo 2020 which is being held from 01 October 2021 to 31 March 2022. It is the first largest international business meet since the Covid-19 pandemic. The Minister has been tasked by Cabinet to monitor all preparations leading to our successful participation in the event.

In this regard, the Minister chaired 4 Inter-Ministerial meetings on 26 May 2021, 7 July 2021, 16 August 2021 and 23 September 2021. The objectives of the meetings were to take stock of the progress made in our preparations and to also address all remaining outstanding issues, in order to ensure our timely participation in the Expo. A number of Ministers as well as representatives of other Ministries and the private sector participated in the meetings.

In preparation for the above Inter-Ministerial meetings, three Senior Officials meetings under the co-Chairmanship of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the CEO of the Economic Development Board and the Commissioner-General of the Mauritius Section were held on 05 May 2021, 23 July 2021 and 08 September 2021.

6. FATF

With regard to the listing of Mauritius on the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey-list and the EU blacklist, the Ministry has been working in close collaboration with the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance (MFSGG) to provide the necessary support in the lobbying efforts to show that Mauritius is sparing no efforts to comply with all international

AML/CFT standards. The Directorate closely monitors the ESAAMLG reports which is the regional body of the FATF.

Technical assistance of MFSGG from our International partners and institutions which helped Mauritius in completing the implementation of the FATF Action Plan were also facilitated by the Ministry.

7. Infrastructure projects with India

Following the official visit of the Minister of External Affairs of India to Mauritius from 21-24 February 2021, the Ministry successfully organised meetings of the Monitoring Committee on the implementation of projects financed by India. The monitoring Committee, which is chaired by the Secretary for Foreign Affairs aims at ensuring the implementation of pending infrastructural projects with India.

8. Conclusion of the negotiations for the Post Cotonou Partnership

Although this was a collective achievement of the ACP and the EU, the Ministry, in collaboration with our Mission in Brussels, obtained the inclusion in the text of the need to address the concerns of Small Island Developing States, as well as the need for consultation between the EU and ACP with regard to actions on financial services and tax jurisdictions.

Lobbying efforts were also made vis à vis the EU for inclusion of Mauritius among the African countries with which the Team Europe Initiative will be working for establishment of vaccine production facilities.

AFRICA AND REGIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS

Achievements for Africa during financial year 2020/2021:

- Following the visit of the new President of Seychelles to Mauritius from 29 November to 01 December 2020, an MoU on Cooperation in Information and Communication Technology and an MoU on Cooperation in the field of Security and Crime Combating between the Mauritius Police Force and the Seychelles Police Force were concluded.
- With a view to assisting Madagascar in its fight against the Covid-19 pandemic, Mauritius donated medical equipment to the Malagasy Government. We also contributed a sum of US \$ 50,000 through the World Food Programme to help Madagascar in its fight against the severe drought that is affecting the south of the country.

- Maintenance of close bilateral relations at the highest level. The Ministry coordinated virtual meetings between the Prime Minister and the Presidents of Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo, Botswana amongst others.
- Organisation of two brainstorming sessions on the Africa Strategy, chaired by the Minister, which saw the participation of representatives of EDB, MAF Ltd and the private sector. The objective was to discuss whether and how to review our existing Africa Strategy.
- Implementation of the decisions taken during the State visits of the Presidents of Kenya, Mozambique and Madagascar and the sessions of the Joint Commissions held with Kenya and Mozambique in 2019.
- Through the AU, Mauritius has received various Personal Protective Equipment, Medical items as well as COVID-19 vaccines to support its policies in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and public health issues. In 2020, the APRM Secretariat set-up a Task Force on Governance Assessment of AU Member States policy responses implemented to mitigate COVID-19. Since September 2020, Mauritius is chairing the Task Force to undertake a comprehensive study to examine Africa's governance response to the COVID-19 pandemic within the framework of disaster management, for a period of up to 24 months.
- Furthermore, the following assistance was secured:
 - (i) USD 105,000 for the implementation of the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment Analysis (RVAA) programme in Mauritius;
 - (ii) USD 500,000 received from SADC for the implementation of a project on Renewable Energy in Mauritius;
 - (iii) Rs 24 million to meet the costs for the feasibility study relating to the Project - New Roche Bois Pumping Station and Baie du Tombeau Wastewater Treatment Plant – under the SADC Project Preparation and Development Facility;
 - (iv) USD 26,346 for three Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) received from the SADC Secretariat to the Mauritius Meteorological Services;
 - (v) €25,000 for the development of a national Aquaculture Strategy by the Competent Authority Seafood for Mauritius under the SADC Strengthening National and Regional Linkages (SNRL) Programme);
 - (vi) USD 60,000 for the organization of an IORA Capacity Building Program on Gender Mainstreaming; and
 - (vii) € 746,883 worth of medical supplies from the IOC Secretariat through the AFD funded 'Veille sanitaire' program to contain the Covid 19 pandemic.
 - (viii) Provision of 182,200 doses of vaccines by the IOC for the foot and mouth disease in Rodrigues.
- Mauritius has been selected to host the Permanent Secretariat of the Committee of Insurance, Securities and Non-Banking Financial Authorities (CISNA). The CISNA Secretariat has already been established;
- Mauritius joined the Adhoc Working Group to revise the eligibility criteria and selection procedure for the post of IORA Secretary General.

- Coordination with COMESA Secretariat and University of Mauritius for the rolling out of the online Master Course in Regional Integration offered by the COMESA Virtual University of Regional Integration. Three Mauritian Nationals have been awarded full scholarships (\$ 3,417 per student) for the two-year Course.
- Launching of the COMESA Digital Platforms:
 - (i) for women in business to facilitate exchange of information and trade in the region; and
 - (ii) for Civil Society and Private Sector to facilitate information sharing and networking.
- Adoption and signature of the ‘Accord portant révision de l’Accord général de coopération entre les Etats membres de la COI’ in March 2020.
 - Successful lobbying for the appointment of:
 - (i) 1 Mauritian national to the IOC Secretariat;
 - (ii) 3 Mauritian nationals at the SADC Secretariat; and
 - (iii) 1 Mauritian national at the COMESA Secretariat.

Achievements in respect of African Union (AU):

- At the level of the African Union, two important decisions on the Chagos Archipelago were adopted as follows:
 - (i) The 21st Extraordinary Session of the Executive Council of the African Union (AU) held in December 2020, agreed to include a paragraph pertaining to the Chagos Archipelago in the decision on Silencing the Guns in Africa. The decision requests all Member States to assist in completing the decolonization of Mauritius, including by supporting all efforts in all international and regional organizations through initiatives, decisions and resolutions aimed at enabling Mauritius to assert its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago pursuant to the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice of 25 February 2019 and UN General Assembly Resolution 73/295.
 - (ii) The 34th Ordinary Session of the Assembly of the African Union (AU), held virtually in February 2021, adopted a Decision on the Decolonisation of Mauritius following the Judgment of the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on 28 January 2021. The Decision *inter alia*, welcomes the Judgment of the Special Chamber of the ITLOS and condemns the continued illegal occupation of the Chagos Archipelago by the United Kingdom in disregard of the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice. It reiterates its calls to the United Kingdom to comply with international law by immediately withdrawing its colonial administration from the Chagos Archipelago and emphasizes the commitment of the African Union and its Member States towards the full decolonization of Africa.

- The candidate of Mauritius, Mrs K. Chooramun, was elected as member of the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights for a period of five years starting 2021 at the 38th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU held in February 2021.
- It is recalled that the COVID-19 African Vaccine Acquisition Team (AVATT), created by His Excellency Cyril Ramaphosa of the Republic of South Africa in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union in November 2020 to ensure that African countries can access a sufficient share of the global vaccine supply to vaccinate 70% of the population of the Continent. The Africa Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) was also created as a Special Purpose Vehicle which serves as a central entity for the negotiation, procurement and payment for vaccines and acts as the interface between AU Member States and the vaccine manufactures. Mauritius engaged with the African Union, the Africa Vaccine Acquisition Trust Fund and the Africa CDC in order to secure necessary vaccines as well as Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to fight the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The effective participation of Mauritius in Summits, Ministerial conferences and other sectoral meetings has helped in increasing the visibility of Mauritius and safeguarding the interests of the country at the African Continent level. In view of the COVID-19 pandemic, Mauritius participated in various virtual AU and African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) Summits, conferences and technical meetings/workshops. At continental level, Mauritius is continuously cooperating with like-minded countries to pursue priority issues which are of mutual interests, particularly trade, investment, security, health, environment, food security, climate change and blue economy, amongst others, while advancing its objectives and concerns as a Small Island Developing State.
- Moreover, the AU is extending its longstanding support to Mauritius regarding the Chagos Archipelago issue. The 34th Ordinary session of the Assembly of the AU, held in February 2021, adopted a decision on the Decolonisation of Mauritius following the Judgment of the Special Chamber of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) on 28 January 2021.
- Through the AU, Mauritius has received various Personal Protective Equipment, Medical items as well as COVID-19 vaccines to support its policies in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic and public health issues. In May 2020, the APRM Secretariat set-up a Task Force on Governance Assessment of AU Member States policy responses implemented to mitigate COVID-19. Since September 2020, Mauritius is chairing the Task Force to undertake a comprehensive study to examine Africa's governance response to the COVID-19 pandemic within the framework of disaster management, for a period of up to 24 months.

- Mauritius has completed its First APRM) Progress Report on the Implementation of the National Plan of Action contained in the Country Review of July 2010. The Report has been submitted to the APRM Continental Secretariat.
- Mauritius is strongly committed to the growth and development of the Continent which would lead to the achievement of the Agenda 2063, the 50-year strategic plan of the AU. In this respect, Mauritius is in the process of submitting its First Country-level Report on the status of implementation of the Agenda 2063, for the period 2013-2020. This will serve as input for the preparation of the Second Continental Report on the Agenda 2063.
- In the lead-up to the submission of our First Country-Level Report on the Status of Implementation of Agenda 2063 for the period 2013-2020, in May 2021, this Ministry organised a training workshop jointly with AU Commission to build national capacity.
- At the 38th Ordinary Session of the Executive Council of the AU in February 2021, the candidate fielded by Mauritius, was elected as a member of the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, for a term of five (5) years starting 2021.

DIPLOMATIC INFLUENCE

Through our diplomatic influence, Mauritius has benefitted from:

- (i) the COVID-19 emergency response measures from friendly countries, through donations of medical equipment and supplies from China and South Korea. India assisted us with 0.5 million tablets of Hydroxychloroquine as well as Ayurveda medicines along with a team of doctors to assist us in our fight of COVID 19.
- (ii) A grant of 300 Million Yen (approx. Rs. 120 Million) from Japan to purchase, inter alia, MRI and radiography systems, CT Scanning equipment, defibrillators, as well as donation of an infrared thermal camera for detection of body temperatures of passengers at the SSR International Airport.
- (iii) Through the UNDP Japan also offered an amount of US\$ 950,400 for a project to support an Inclusive and Multi-sectoral response to COVID-19 and addressing its impacts in Mauritius.
- (iv) Assistance received from friendly countries in our quest to combat the oil spill by the MV Wakashio as below:
 - India provided us with 30T of specialised equipment, a 10-member Technical Response Team and the INS Nireekshak Diving Vessel.
 - China provided a donation of 200,000 RMB equivalent to 1,100,000 MUR to the Government of Mauritius for oil combat, pollution management and marine ecosystem restoration.

- Japan sent several Expert Teams to Mauritius to assist to contain the oil spill caused by the MV Wakashio and in its salvage operation. Japan is also proposing to offer Mauritius a new grant aid under the “Economic and Social Development Programme” scheme in the area of natural disaster prevention.
- Negotiations on the Post Cotonou Documents (Foundation Document and Africa Regional Protocol): The Ministry obtained the insertion of texts in the Post Cotonou Documents which reflects our interests and those of SIDS, notably with regard to unilateral actions by the European Union which have a detrimental effect on our financial services sector.
- Russia donated PCR kits and reagents (10 sets of test systems for 1000 studies and reagents) to the Government of Mauritius at the outset of the pandemic. Moreover, Mauritius successfully negotiated and signed an agreement with the Russian Direct Investment Fund for the provision of 625 000 treatments (625 000 doses of component I and 625000 doses of Component II) of the Sputnik V vaccine against covid-19. In spite of high worldwide and domestic demands, we were able to secure the first consignment of 60,000 doses of both Component 1 and Component II of Sputnik V vaccines from the RDIF. Mauritius and Russia signed virtually the Memorandum of Mutual Understanding between the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping and the Federal Agency for Fisheries of the Russian Federation on 8 September 2021. The Memorandum aims to develop cooperation in the field of fisheries and aquaculture on a mutually beneficial and equitable basis in accordance with the national legislation of each country.

The Russian authorities have expressed the interests to operate 2 weekly flight of Aeroflot as from November 2021, with the possibility for the frequency to go up to 4 weekly flights as from December 2021/January 2022.

- The Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) which was signed between Mauritius and Estonia in February 2021, entered into force on 12 October 2021, following the completion of all the necessary procedures by the Estonian authorities.
- Mauritius has concluded a Bilateral Consultation Mechanism (BCM) with Germany on 09 March 2021. Another BCM with Italy was concluded on 28 October 2020 and with Estonia on 19 February 2021.
- India has continuously assisted us in a number of projects in form of grants, lines of credit and technical support. The Metro Express is the flagship project for the government of Mauritius. The launch of the Metro Express and the ENT Hospital was held on 03 October 2019. In February 2021, a delegation from India, led by H.E. Dr. Jaishankar, Minister of External Affairs of India was in Mauritius for an official visit during which the following agreements were signed:

- (i) The Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) ;
- (ii) The Memorandum of Understanding on Consumer Protection and Legal Metrology;
- (iii) The Agreement for a line of credit of US\$ 100 million from the Government of India;

Following the signature of the CECPA, a series of sensitization workshops have been held, virtually, to promote the opportunities provided by the Agreement. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade participated online in such promotional events with the Bharat Chamber of Commerce in May 2021, and had interactive sessions with the Indian business community during events organized by the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2021 June, and on 7 June 2021 both the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Finance participated in the Confederation of Indian Industries. It is noted that Mauritius had obtained 100,000 doses of vaccines as donation from the Government of India in January 2021. Another 100, 000 doses of Covishield were procured from the Serum Institute of India in February 2021 and a further 200,000 Covaxin doses were procured from Bharat Biotech in March 2021.

A mechanism has been set up for the monitoring of the projects under the line of credit provided by India. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, R.I &I.T is coordinating the mechanism and a first meeting with the relevant authorities was held on 30 July 2021, under the Chairmanship of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs and the implementation of various projects are being monitored, including inter-alia, the 8MW Solar Photovoltaic Farm at Henrietta; the Construction of Civil Service College, the Construction of building of New National Archives and National Library, the Construction of Forensic Science Laboratory, construction of the Renal Transplant Unit, 2 Medclinics, 4 Area Health Centres and the replacement of old and defective Water Pipes.

- The expertise of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) in the field of space technology was solicited for validating the design and building of our first NanoSatellite, the Mauritian Infra Red Satellite (MIR-SAT1). The Cubesat was successfully launched in June 2021. The Ministry has been following up with the Embassy of Japan and the relevant authorities in Mauritius on the launch of the satellite.
- Visit of the H.E Mr. Toshimitsu MOTEGI, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, who was on an official visit to Mauritius from 12 to 13 December 2020.
- On 13 December 2020, Japan donated a grant of JPY 600 Million (Rs 226 Million) for the procurement of equipment in relation to natural disaster prevention
- On 22 February 2021, Japan signed an agreement with Mauritius on a Grant of JPY 600 million (Rs 226 Million) for the acquisition of a Coastal Surveillance Radar System

Repatriation of Mauritian Nationals stranded abroad following lockdown in March 2020

The Ministry repatriated some 8314 Mauritians from around the world through London, Paris, Dubai, Seychelles. This included the successful repatriation of some 2500 Mauritian Cruise Workers and 47 Mauritian Nationals from Wuhan and other parts of China. This endeavour was made possible with the help of the Chinese and the French Authorities.

OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS

- On the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations Organisation in 2020, the Ministry, in collaboration with the Office of the UN Regional Coordinator, organised a High-level event on 28 October 2020 at the Trianon Convention Centre, to mark the event. The Hon. Prime Minister was the Chief Guest and the function was attended by 700 guests. A short production highlighting the UN involvement in Mauritius was also broadcast on that occasion.
- Mauritius is candidate for a Non-Permanent Seat to the UN Security Council (UNSC) in 2025-26. Elections are due to take place in June 2024. The Ministry is pursuing all efforts to obtain the endorsement of the African Union in favour of its candidature prior to canvassing wider support.
- The Ministry is coordinating diplomatic initiatives in favour of the candidature of Mauritius to the UNESCO Executive Board for the term 2023 to 2027. Mauritius deferred its earlier candidature for the term 2021-2025 at the request of the East African Group in Paris and the latter has provided support to the new term for Mauritius.
- The Ministry also assisted in the following:
 - (i) election of Mauritius to the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) for the term 2022-2024. The ECOSOC is one of the six main organs of the United Nations. Our membership on the ECOSOC will increase the visibility of Mauritius on the international scene and would provide leveraging opportunities for Mauritius.
 - (ii) election of the candidate of Mauritius, former Chief Justice Mr Bernard Yeung Sik Yuen, to the UN Committee on Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). Mr. Yeung Sik Yuen was re-elected for a third term as a member on the Committee on 24 June 2021 in New York.
 - (iii) the election of Mauritius to the International Seabed Authority based in Jamaica for the period 2021 to 2024. The Council supervises and coordinates, promotes and regulates

exploration for and exploitation of deep-sea minerals by States, corporations and other entities.

- Former Chief Justice Mr. Yeung Kam John YEUNG SIK YUEN, G.O.S.K. was re-elected for a third term on the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discriminations at the elections which took place on 24 June 2021 in New York. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was deeply involved in the lobbying exercise which also included the conclusion of 60 reciprocal support of candidatures arrangements with countries to maximise the chances of election of the Mauritian candidate. Mr Yeung Sik Yuen's mandate will end on 19 January 2026.

IMPLEMENTATION OF ELECTRONIC DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (EDMS)

The Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) for the managing and processing of documents electronically, is being implemented to replace the outdated, disparate manual system of hard filing. It operates in a paperless environment ultimately leading to cost saving, work efficiency, instant access to/sharing of information, time saving and ensuring business continuity on a 24-hr basis.

Regarding the implementation of the EDMS project, the Ministry achieved the following:

- Setting Up of the Due Diligence Committee in accordance with Procurement Act governing G to G agreement
- Following meetings of the Due Diligence Committee and submission of its report/recommendations to the High Powered Committee, approval of Government was obtained.

Status on Implementation of Budget Measures

A number of measures were announced in the Budget 2020-2021. Table 1 below shows the status of the measures which pertain to the Ministry.

Para in Budget Speech	Budget measure	Status
81.	81. Government will support the first two years of operation of a “Made in Mauritius” warehouse set-up in Tanzania and Mozambique.	<p>Mozambique</p> <p>The project involves the setting up of a warehouse for Mauritian products that have the potential to penetrate the Mozambican market. The International Trade Division of the Ministry has conducted technical meetings with the EDB, MCCI and MEXA to examine the project proposal submitted by the High Commissioner in Maputo.</p> <p><i>Note: According to the High Commissioner in Maputo, the project value is Rs 6 million. During a technical meeting held under the chair of ITD Director on 13 October 2020, it was noted that the amount may well be underestimated.</i></p> <p>The EDB organized an Expression of Interest (EOI) which ended on 20 January 2021. No results were obtained from the EOI. On 02 February 2021 during a meeting for the Africa Warehousing Scheme, it was decided that a new country will be identified for the warehousing project. The EDB is currently waiting for the next budget before proceeding further.</p> <p>Tanzania</p> <p>MEXA has requested Government support for the setting up of a Mauritian Warehouse in Tanzania. The rationale is that Mauritian exports face the main challenge of low level of market penetration in Eastern African countries. The Warehouse will also reach out to Tanzania’s neighbouring countries namely Rwanda,</p>

		<p>Burundi, Uganda and Zambia.</p> <p>MEXA has launched an Expression of interest for the Mauritius Africa Warehousing Project in Tanzania. Interested Export and Manufacturing companies were requested to submit their Expression of Interest by 21 October 2020.</p> <p>At the request of the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning & Development, a committee has been set up by EDB to implement the Africa Warehousing Scheme project. This committee is chaired by the EDB Mauritius and comprises of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Industrial Development, MCCI and MEXA. The committee has approved the guidelines, claim form and registration form for AWS in Tanzania. On 07 May 2021 the MEXA informed verbally that a report on the warehousing project is being finalized. The report will be transmitted to Ministry shortly.</p>
96.	96. Government is committed to completing the five remaining recommendations under the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Action Plan for Mauritius by September 2020.	On 02 April 2021, Mauritius submitted its third progress report to the FATF Joint Group (JG). The report was discussed during the face to face meeting with the JG on 12 May 2021. The report will then go to the FATF Plenary in June 2021.
97.	<p>97. To comply with these 5 recommendations, we will implement the following measures:</p> <p>(a) Risk-based supervisions in accordance with the recommendations of the FATF;</p> <p>(b) Targeted outreach programmes to promote clear understanding of money-laundering and terrorist financing risks;</p> <p>(c) Increased reporting of suspicious transactions;</p> <p>(d) Targeted financial sanctions in cases of terrorist financing; and</p> <p>(e) Timely access to beneficial</p>	<p>As at April 2021, the following had already been implemented:</p> <p>(a) The FSC and Designated Non-Financial Businesses and Professionals (DNFBPs) Supervisors have implemented Risk Based Supervision (RBS) plans for sectors falling under the AML/CFT purview;</p> <p>(b) Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) can conduct Money Laundering investigations, parallel financial investigations and complex cases.</p> <p>(c) With the increase in economic activity post confinement, there is an upward trajectory relative to raising further awareness and increased diversity in respect of Suspicious Transactions Reporting (STR);</p> <p>(d) Mauritius national Terrorism Financing (TF) risk exposure has been downgraded to Low-Medium following the completion of a</p>

	ownership information.	comprehensive Non Profit Organisations (NPO) survey; (e) Information regarding beneficial ownership is available to competent authorities in real time.
98.	98. Furthermore, a new AML/CFT (Miscellaneous Provisions) Bill will be introduced to complement existing legislative framework.	The AML/CFT (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2020 was proclaimed in July 2020. The Act aims at bringing further improvements to our framework on AML/CFT. Furthermore, a Financial Crime Court Division has been set up within the Supreme Court and the Intermediate Court with a view to ensuring that financial crime cases are dealt with expeditiously and in line with the norms of FATF. Cases are already being heard by the Financial Crime Court.
Annex B5.	B.5. Digital Transformation With the objective of digitalising our public sector, the following measures will be implemented - (a) the implementation of an electronic Document Management System (eDMS) will be accelerated for the whole of Public Service to effectively and efficiently manage and exchange electronic documents between Government agencies and ensuring operational continuity irrespective of location.	Ministry has made a formal request for the release of 3 to 4 IT Specialists (from the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation) who will be entrusted to work in tandem with the e-GA consultants as part of a Task Force to look into technical troubleshooting, problem-solving and capacity-building related issues and oversee the smooth running of the project as a whole from a technical and IT-logistics angle. After the handover of the project, the local IT experts will have to ensure the continuity and sustainability of the EDMS. The process for the acquisition of the IT infrastructure in terms of laptops, headset and scanners is underway. The contract agreement with the e-GA is expected to be finalized pending all issues related to the technical readiness of the project are sorted out in terms of HR requirements, secondment of IT specialists, acquisition of IT equipment, training, among others. The current pandemic situation and the second lockdown are also delaying the project on multiple fronts.

Table 1 – Status on Budget Measures 2020/21

Status on Implementation of Key Actions

Table 2 below shows the status of the Key Actions and the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) pertaining to the Ministry which were included in the Budget 2020/2021

MONITORING OF KEY ACTIONS AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR FY 2020/2021					
Reporting period: July 2020 to June 2021					
SN	Key Action	Key Performance Indicator	Target 2020/2021	Actual as at 30 June 2021	Remarks (pls indicate any bottleneck and remedial action)
Vote 8-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade					
1	Creating opportunities for export of goods and services and promotion of investment	Number of trade links established for Mauritian enterprises leading to export opportunities	250	367	MHC, London: 27 MHC, Maputo: 3 MHC, Mumbai: 16 MHC, New Delhi: 17 MHC, Pretoria: 30 ME, Paris: 235 ME, Brussels: 6 ME, Berlin: 5 ME, Riyadh: 20 ME, Moscow: 5 MHC, Canberra: 2 ME, Addis Ababa: 1 ME, New York: nil ME, Beijing: nil ME, Cairo: nil MHC, Kuala Lumpur: nil ME PM, Geneva: nil ME, Washington: nil ME, Antananarivo: nil MHC, Islamabad: nil
2	Securing economic opportunities through the implementation of various diplomatic strategies	Number of activities agreed during Joint Commissions	15	-	Joint Commissions with selected African countries were scheduled to be held as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seychelles 13th Session in 2019 • Madagascar 2nd Session in 2020 • Mozambique Mid Term Review of the Joint Commissions in 2020 • Kenya Mid Term Renew of the Joint Commissions in 2020 Due to the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, it has not been possible to hold the above-mentioned sessions of the Joint Commissions.

3	Preparation of regional projects for funding	Number of regional projects submitted to Regional Economic Communities	5	6	<p>1. Further to the request of Mauritius, a sum of \$45,000 has been allocated under the SADC Regional Vulnerability Assessment and Analysis Programme for the setting up of the Mauritius National Vulnerability Assessment Committee (NVAC). Cabinet approval has been obtained for the setting up of the NVAC. The allocation has been increased to \$105,000 for the Financial year 2020/2021. The programme is underway. Training has been provided to NVAC members on (i) vulnerability assessment and analysis (VAA) processes and quality assurance; (ii) Urban vulnerability assessments; and (iii) An introduction to Household Economic Analysis (HEA).</p> <p>2. Funds to the tune of USD 500,000 have been granted to Mauritius for the implementation of the project “Development of Guidelines and Standards for Renewable Energy in Mauritius” under the SADC Project Preparation and Development Facility (PPDF). The project is expected to be completed in August 2021.</p> <p>3. Mauritius has submitted an application for IORA Special Fund to the tune of approximately \$19,000 for the organisation of an IORA Workshop on nature-based tourism in June 2020. The Workshop has been postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>4. Mauritius has submitted an application for IORA Special Funds to the tune of US\$ 60,000 for the organisation of a high-level capacity building programme on gender mainstreaming in the six priority areas of cooperation of the IORA in April/May 2020. The application has been approved. The implementation of the programme is currently on hold due to the COVID-19 outbreak.</p> <p>5. Mauritius has submitted a project proposal to the tune of USD 30,742 to the IORA Secretariat entitled “Disaster Resilient Infrastructure: IORA</p>
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					<p>Sub Regional Workshop for Small Island Developing States” under the IORA-GIZ Cooperation Programme. The project has been submitted to the IORA Secretariat for consideration. A reply is awaited.</p> <p>6. Mauritius has submitted the project “Technical Assistance to further enhance the development of the leather value chain” to the tune of Euro 113,250 to the COMESA Secretariat for funding consideration under the Technical Assistance Facility programme. A reply is awaited.</p>
4	Expanding trade agreements and market access	Finalisation of negotiations and implementation of the AfCFTA	Jun-21	<p>Trade under the AfCFTA started on 01 Jan 2021. Negotiations are still ongoing for rules of origin on products of export interest to Mauritius. Negotiations on Market access for both goods and services are ongoing. These are expected to be concluded by Dec 2021. Negotiations on Phase II issues namely Investment, Competition Policy, Intellectual Property and e-commerce are expected to be concluded by the year 2022.</p>	Challenges to reach consensus in the rules of origin negotiations due to divergent interests of Member States.
		Signature of the CECPA with India	Oct-20	Agreement signed in February 2021 and entered into force on 01 April 2021	Series of sensitisation workshops being conducted in collaboration with Indian Chambers, EDB and MCCI.
		Finalisation of negotiations and implementation of the Tripartite SADC/ COMESA/EAC	Jun-21	Negotiations on Rules of Origin and Market Access are ongoing	<p>Challenges to reach consensus in the negotiations due to divergent interests of Member States.</p> <p>Tripartite meetings were held virtually from 21-22 June 2021.</p>
		Implementation of the Mauritius-China FTA	Ongoing implementation	<p>FTA is in force and trade is ongoing (a) Total exports under the FTA as at 30 June 2021: Rs 32 million</p> <p>(b) National Sensitization Workshop organized in March 2021 by the EDB in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and</p>	Possible cumbersome SPS and TBT requirements (sanitary and technical barriers) - Remedial action: As a first step, we are looking into the possibility of further cooperation with China on SPS issues – including equivalence of measures to facilitate trade between the two countries – on identified

				<p>International Trade products by the EDB. (MFARIIT).</p> <p>(c) Series of presentation/meetings with the private sector on the FTA for dissemination of information and in view of exploring trade opportunities.</p> <p>(d) Monthly coordination meeting bring together the EDB, MFARIIT, our Embassy in Beijing and the Economic Counsellor based in Shanghai.</p>
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Table 2 – Status of Key Actions and KPIs for year 2020/2021

NATIONAL AUDIT OFFICE REPORT

There was no adverse comment on the Ministry in the Report of the Director of Audit for the Financial Year July 2017 to June 2018. The comments for the report 2018/2019 are being addressed at the level of the Senior Management of the Ministry with a view to come up with appropriate solutions and implement adequate remedial measures.

Following the submission of the Director of Audit report in January 2021 for year 2019/2020, a special Audit Committee was setup and observations made by the Director of Audit have been looked into. Some of the observations have already been addressed and continuous followup is being done.

SYSTEM OF INTERNAL AUDIT

Internal audit is an independent objective assurance and consulting activity designed to add value and improve an organization's operations. It helps an organization to accomplish its objectives by bringing a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve the effectiveness of risk management, control and governance processes. Internal audit activities are conducted by the Internal Control Cadre which falls under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance Economic Planning and Development.

The staffing structure of the Internal Control Unit for the year 2020/21, posted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration & International Trade comprises of one Assistant Manager Internal Control only.

The main tasks conducted by the Unit consist of;

- Evaluating control systems
- Ensuring compliance to rules, procedures and regulations
- Evaluating organizational efficiency and effectiveness
- Evaluating the accuracy and reliability of the Ministry's reporting processes
- Evaluating effectiveness of Ministry's' accountability framework, and the extent of adherence to ethical standards, and;
- Ensuring audit findings and recommendations add value to the organization and provide an independent opinion whether the organization goals and objectives have been achieved in an economic, efficient and effective manner.

Planned audit coverage

The table below provides the status of internal audit activities, for planned audit, carried out during for period July 2019 to June 2020 based on the approved Internal Audit Annual Plan. The Internal Control Unit has achieved 36 % coverage of approved planned audits for the period under review.

SN	Project Assignment name and number	Status (in progress/ completed)	Report Status	
			Draft/Final Report date	No of recommendations
1	Transport Management ICC/MFA/2020-21/ 72 /1	Completed	13/11/2020	7
2	Compensation of Employees (Overseas) ICC/MOFA/2020-2021/128/3	Completed	22/07/2021	2
3	Warehouse Management ICC/MOFA/2020-2021/127/2	Completed	15/07/2021	13
4	Procurement (Overseas)	Completed	15/07/2021	3

Special Assignments

During the same financial year, two special assignments were carried out as tabled below:

Sn	Project Assignment name and number	Status (in progress/ completed)	Report Status
			Final Report date
1	Attendance of staff ICC/MFA/2019-20/SA/332/1	Completed	27-05-20
2	Special Assignments Write off irrecoverable debts- ICC/MOFA/2020-21/SA/48/1	Completed	Report issued to Director Internal Control & Management of MOFA on 14/08/20

Follow up work conducted

A follow up audit over the performance audit report on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has been performed. The detail of which are tabled below:

Sn	Reference Number	Title of reports	Date Issued
1	ICC/MFA/2019-20/58/1	Follow-up PAC Report-SDGs	24-09-19

Special assignments

SN	Project Assignment name and number	Status (in progress/ completed)	Report Status
			Final Report date
1	Attendance ICC/MFA/2019-20/SA/332/1	Completed	27-05-20

AUDIT COMMITTEE 2020/2021

An Audit Committee, chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary, was set up to review management and control processes throughout the organization. During the period under review, the Audit Committee met on four occasions, to review progress in implementing corrective actions proposed by the Director of Audit as well as reports from the Internal Control.

OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH COMMITTEE

An Occupational Safety and Health Committee chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary was set up on 29 August 2018 to look into issues relating to safety, health and welfare of employees at work and to promote a working environment which is safe and without health risk.

ANTI-CORRUPTION COMMITTEE

In line with the Public Sector Anti-Corruption Framework, an Anti-Corruption Committee has been set up at the Ministry. The Committee is chaired by the Deputy Permanent Secretary and also comprises of an integrity officer as well as a secretary. It is responsible for the development of anti-corruption initiatives and programmes, for an effective implementation of the Anti-Corruption framework. The Anti-Corruption policy was signed on 03 May 2019 and was forwarded to the ICAC. Officers who are part of the Committee have attended various training workshops organized by the ICAC in November 2020.

During the period under review, the Ministry conducted two Corruption Risk Assessments, namely in the area of Events Management and for the cash office at the Industrial Property Office (IPO).

TRAINING COMMITTEE

A standing Training Committee has been set up on 07 July 2018 to examine applications made for attending training, workshops/seminars held abroad as well as locally. The Training Committee is chaired by the Permanent Secretary and comprises of the Deputy Permanent Secretary, a First Secretary and Manager, Human Resource or Assistant Manager, Human Resource as members.

PART III – FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

Financial Highlights

The Budget 2020/2021 makes provision for 3 sub-heads as follows:

- 8-101: General
- 8-102: Foreign Relations and Regional Integration
- 8-103: International Trade

Budgetary Provision

The overall budgetary allocation of the Ministry has been decreased from Rs 1,290 million in financial year 2019/2020 to Rs 1,190 million in financial year 2020/2021. This decrease of Rs 100 million is partly on account of the Recurrent Budget by Rs 97.1 million in respect of Contribution to International Organisation, Compensation of Employees; Goods and services, allowance to Minister and partly on account of the Capital Budget by Rs 2.9 million in respect of Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets

Statements of Revenue and Expenditure for Financial Year 2020-2021

Statement of Revenue

Table 3 below shows a summary of total revenue from Sales of Goods and Services (Trade Mark, Patents and Industrial Design) and other sources which were collected by the Ministry.

Revenue	2020-2021 Estimates	2020-2021 Actual
	Rs	Rs
Sales of Goods and Services (Trade Mark, Patents, Industrial Design)	16,050,000	17,060,870
Miscellaneous Revenues	12,000	4,180
Total Revenue	16,062,000	17,065,050

Table 3

Statement of Expenditure

Table 4 provides a summary of total expenditure incurred by the Ministry under Vote 8-1 (Ministry) which includes Sub-Heads 8-101, 8-102 and 8-103.

Head/Sub-Head of Expenditure	2019-2020 Actual Rs	2020-2021 Estimates	2020-2021 Actual Rs
Vote 8-1 Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade			
Sub-Head 8-101: General			
Compensation of Employees	60,501,147	55,206,000	54,550,150
Goods and Services	13,908,196	12,794,000	12,880,306
Acquisition of Non-Financial	1,712,015	1,625,000	1,614,600
Total	74,121,358	68,000,000	68,934,056
Sub-Head 8-102: Foreign Relations and Regional Integration			
Compensation of Employees	426,256,860	385,427,000	430,837,540
Goods and Services	268,768,992	249,495,000	275,505,401
Grants	272,311,269	292,878,000	317,886,708
Donation to International Institution	9,641,292	2,100,000	1,926,245
Acquisition of Non-Financial	65,778,782	99,600,000	19,791,004
Total	1,042,757,195	1,027,400,000	1,046,016,898
Sub-Head 8-103: International Trade			
Compensation of Employees	32,677,505	31,176,000	30,511,842
Goods and Services	27,991,749	56,570,000	49,334,059
Grants	2,253,979	3,354,000	2,574,228

Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	2,478,141	3,500,000	483,680
Total	65,401,374	94,600,000	82,864,578
TOTAL EXPENDITURE for Vote 8-1	1,184,279,927	1,190,000,000	1,197,815,532
Actual expenditure as compared to Estimated \approx 99.51%			

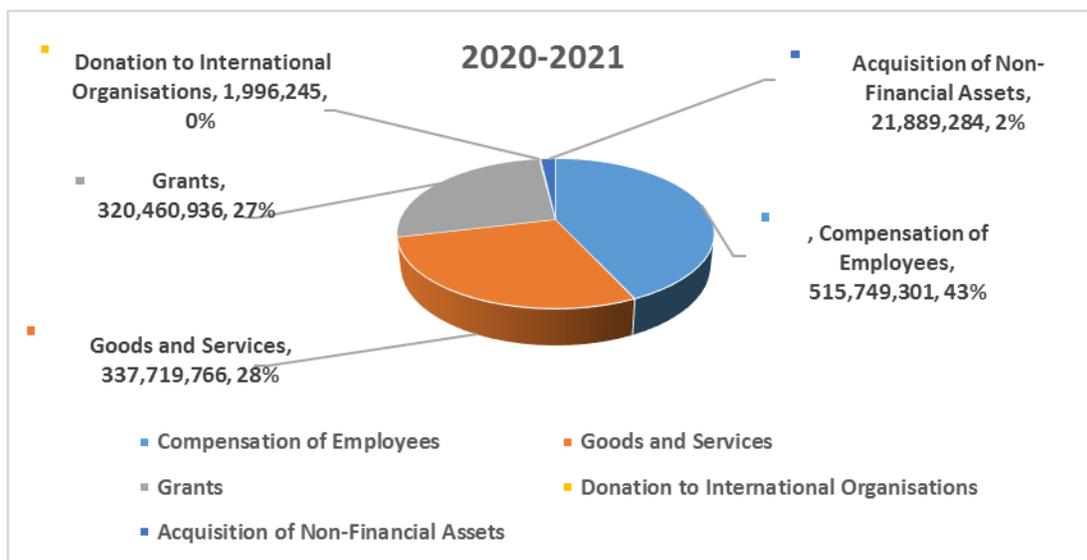
Note:(1) Estimates 2020-21 comprises Reallocation of Funds made during the year including Donation from MOFEPD

Table 4 below shows the total expenditure of all the 3 Sub-Heads of the different components and their respective percentage of the total expenditure

Components	2020-2021 MUR	Percentage (%)
Compensation of Employees	515,749,301	43.06%
Goods and Services	337,719,799	28.19%
Grants	320,460,936	26.75%
Donation to International Organisations	1,996,245	0.17%
Acquisition of Non-Financial Assets	21,889,284	1.83%
Total	1,197,815,532	100.00%

Table 4 Actual Expenditure 2020-2021

The pie chart below gives a graphical distribution of the expenditure incurred during the last financial year.



PART IV – WAY FORWARD

Trends and Challenges

The Vision 2030 document requires that Mauritius sustainably moves onto a higher growth path and that growth is equitably distributed among all the segments of the population.

As a growth enabler the Ministry contributes to the achievement of Government strategic objectives by conducting and coordinating our efforts to further our agenda for the development of Mauritius at regional and international levels, and by leveraging our connections with the world for the socio-economic development of the country.

The Ministry, however, operates in a challenging operational and geopolitical environment. It has finite resources and budgetary constraints. There are constant demands on the Ministry to deliver more efficiently and to maximize its economic and diplomatic reach while at the same time coordinating and consolidating the position of Mauritius on issues of interest and significance on the regional and international scenes.

In its effort to strengthen economic and trade relations with traditional partners, emerging economies and countries on the African Continent, the Ministry has encountered several challenges such as:

- (i) Internal and inter-state conflicts which occasion political instability;
- (ii) Trade disputes between major trading nations;
- (iii) Brexit and its impact on ACP countries
- (iv) Protracted Bilateral and Multilateral negotiations arising from deadlocks on certain issues;
- (v) Infrastructural and Institutional inadequacies in Mauritius and other countries to respond in a timely manner in a constantly changing political and economic world environment;
- (vi) Slowdown of trade negotiations and discussions as a result of the challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic;
- (vii) Lack of human and financial resources;
- (viii) High costs of doing business as a small island developing state;
- (ix) Lack of updated information and data on countries within the region;
- (x) Natural calamities and epidemics; and
- (xi) There has been some levitation in the fulcrum and gravity of global power which has shifted to the East. A rising India, a more assertive China and an outward looking Japan are potential for prospects to be explored.

Strengths

- Political stability and peaceful co-existence.
- Well-developed diplomatic network, covering 55 countries.
- Membership of several regional and international organisations.
- Strong relationship with countries of ancestral linkages.
- Highly-educated, multi-lingual and multi-cultural society.
- An efficient air, maritime and digital connectivity.

Challenges

- Global economic downturn due to COVID-19.
- Remoteness from main export markets.
- Limited resources to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change.
- External shocks emanating from Brexit and rise of protectionist policies.
- More efforts required to attract Foreign Direct Investment.
- Global setback of the tourism industry associated with COVID-19.
- Efforts to maintain Mauritius as a financial jurisdiction of repute
- Political uncertainty due to internal and interstate conflicts;
- High costs of doing business in Africa;
- Lack of willingness to domesticate regional instruments;

Opportunities

- African Continental Free Trade Area with a market access of more than one billion people;
- Favourable conditions of market access to COMESA and SADC.
- Mauritius-China Free Trade Area.
- Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement (CECPA) with India.
- Other Bilateral Free Trade Agreements.
- Potential for enhanced cooperation to address global crisis.

Strategic Direction 2021/2024

Strategic Direction	→	Enabler
WTO Fisheries Subsidies – text based negotiations	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ensure that the WTO Agreement on fisheries subsidies contain adequate flexibilities for SIDS
Improve trade relations with the EU	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To complete negotiations on the deepening of the EPA with the EU to include amongst others, trade in services, investment, intellectual property and sustainable development.
Further improve trade relations with the UK	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ to agree on a roadmap with the UK on the deepening of our economic relations
Improve trade relations with SADC	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To complete negotiations in priority sectors on trade in services including distribution and business services
COMESA - Deepening of collaboration with COMESA	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To complete outstanding work on trade in services and effectively implement the regulations on NTBs ▪
African Continental Free Trade Area	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Complete negotiations on African Continental FTA ▪ To pursue discussions on outstanding issues and on Phase II issues: e-commerce, Intellectual Property Rights and Investment ▪ Effective implementation of AfCFTA Agreement through the setting up of National Implementation Committee
Trade Relations with the US	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To ensure continuity of trade with the US in a post AGOA situation ▪ To reiterate the need for a solution for those AGOA countries, which risk trade disruption due to the graduation clause. ▪ To pursue lobbying efforts to conclude a FTA with the US
FTA with China	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Operationalisation of the FTA with China ▪ Holding Mauritius-China Joint Commission and follow up on the implementation of the FTA. ▪ Strategise with EDB and private sector to maximize on the opportunities under the FTA
Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA)	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Develop appropriate marketing strategies ▪ To schedule a meeting of the High Powered Joint Trade Committee
PTA with Indonesia		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Proposed modalities on market access to be transmitted to Indonesian side ▪ Requests lists to be exchanged ▪ Texts on PTA and Rules of Origin to be finalized ▪ Third round of negotiation tentatively scheduled for December 2021
FTA with United Arab Emirates		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius initiating discussions with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on a Mauritius-UAE Free Trade Agreement (FTA).

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A first draft FTA text has been transmitted to the UAE side. ▪ To start negotiations with the UAE
Enforcement of the Industrial Property Act 2019	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ It is planned that the act would be proclaimed on 01 Jan 2022 ▪ Thereafter, within a period of three months, the new Industrial Property Office of Mauritius would be set up as well as the Intellectual Property Council. ▪ To accede to WIPO-administered Treaties and ARIPO Protocols
Provide a framework to protect the domestic industry in circumstances of increased imports causing injury	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To finalise draft Bill on Trade Remedy to be adopted by the National Assembly
Strengthen regional and bilateral relations	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Active participation in regional fora ▪ Increase our footprint at regional, continental and international level ▪ Work towards sustainable development through the deepening and acceleration of Regional Integration
Promote regional cooperation and integration	→	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Elaborate regional projects in specific areas of interest ▪ Improve air, maritime and digital connectivity ▪ Foster industrialization through regional linkages ▪ Advocate Science, Technology and Innovation to enhance creativity, learning capability and job creation ▪ Enhance intra-regional trade and investment Ensure sustainable use of marine resources