

**STATEMENT BY HON. K.K.S.JAGUTPAL, MINISTER OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS,
REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS AT THE 73RD WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY
18 – 19 MAY 2020**

Mr President

Director-General, WHO

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As Minister of Health and Wellness of the Republic of Mauritius, it gives me great pleasure to address this august assembly.

The Government of Mauritius acknowledges the global leadership role of WHO and welcomes this opportunity to collectively address the COVID-19 pandemic. I would now like to share our experience in dealing with this unprecedented situation.

As of today, there are no active COVID-19 cases in Mauritius. Mauritius has shown that it can be one of the countries that can beat coronavirus and it has done so by being very proactive and taking the following measures recommended for good control:-

- 1) Mauritius acted very quickly in taking precautionary measures against this virus as far back as the 23 January 2020 after the first cases of death in Wuhan were reported. These included sensitization about the novel Coronavirus as well as screening at the airport, surveillance by the Health Inspectorate, setting up of a Rapid Response Team at each Regional Hospital and quarantining of suspected cases and issuing of a travel advisory regarding passengers coming from Wuhan and other provinces in China.
- 2) Strict travel restrictions were announced by our Prime Minister as soon as the Director General of WHO declared that COVID-19 was a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January 2020. Surveillance at SSR International Airport was stepped up as well as at the Seaport.

- 3) Massive amount of testing is being carried out both by PCR and rapid antigen testing. Laboratory testing of suspected cases by throat swabs started on 3 February 2020. Rapid testing is also being carried out for all healthcare workers, police officers and residents of Residential homes. Contact tracing has been initiated for every positive case. 7,251 contact tracing were done up until 2 May 2020. A hotline service was set up. Flu clinics have been set up in each Regional Hospital where all patients are tested for COVID-19. As at 14 May 2020, 24,288 PCR and 58,706 rapid tests have been carried out.
- 4) Procurement of PPE, laboratory reagents and medical supplies has been fast tracked. All our healthcare workers are provided with appropriate protective equipment. Wearing of face mask, use of sanitizer and social distancing measures are applied as strict as possible.
- 5) On the 19th of March 2020, three cases of COVID-19 were detected in Mauritius. Immediately, the Honorable Prime Minister took the bold decision of nationwide confinement effective for two weeks as from 20 March 2020. This sanitary curfew was extended till 15 April 2020 and then 4 May 2020 and now been extended till 1st June 2020 but some activities are allowed to operate as from 15th May 2020.
- 6) The Prime Minister has held daily high level meetings ensuring involvement of all stakeholders and the population is kept informed of developments on a daily basis.

Although the total number of 332 positive cases of COVID-19 has been detected in Mauritius, sadly, 10 persons have passed away. It is on the other hand encouraging to highlight that Mauritius has not registered any new positive COVID-19 case for the last 21 days. Our last positive case registered dates back to the 26th of April 2020.

Thanks to the support of the WHO and other international partners including friendly countries, all regional partners and national stakeholders and above all the cooperation of the people of Mauritius, we have been able to contain the spread of the disease. However, as we seek to de-confine progressively, we remain as vigilant as ever. Mauritius remains engaged with the WHO. Let us all stay safe.