



**INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
2018 ANNUAL REPORT**

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES

CONTENT	PAGE NO.
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. MEMBERSHIP	3
3. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE	4
4. MEETING WITH DIGNITARIES	4
5. OTHER MEETNGS	5
6. OVERSEAS MISSIONS	6
7. NON-COMMITTEE RELATED OVERSEAS MISSIONS	7
8. FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION GROUPS	8
9. RECOMMENDATIONS	8
10. CONCLUSION	8
11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	9
12. SIGNATURES	10
13. ANNEX 1	11

1. INTRODUCTION

Article 104 of the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles provides the National Assembly with the powers that allow our institution to set up committees that serve in the efficient discharge of members responsibilities. It is one of the mechanisms at the disposal of the National Assembly in its quest for good governance, transparency and accountability of the Executive. The International Affairs Committee (IAC) of the 6th National Assembly was established following a motion approved by the National Assembly on 4th October 2016.

Article 104 of the Constitution of the Republic of Seychelles, the Rules and Procedures for Committees and Standing Orders 2009 provide the statutory and procedural authority for the establishment and functioning of the IAC.

The Committee Members have for the past year worked to maintain the existing bilateral relations, have participated in international meetings and seminars, and have represented the National Assembly at local functions organized by foreign partners or locally based Diplomatic Missions.

The IAC is mandated as per its Terms of Reference laid out in Annex 1.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The current Committee consists of seven Members as follows:

- Hon. Jean Francois Ferrari - Chairperson
- Hon. Clifford Andre - Vice Chairperson
- Hon. John Hoareau - Member
- Hon. Waven William - Member
- Hon. Noline Sophola - Member
- Hon. Jude Valmont - Member
- Hon. Flory Larue - Member

The Committee is assisted by Mrs. Dolores Azemia as Secretary and Ms. Samia Lebon as Assistant Secretary.

3. MEETINGS OF THE COMMITTEE

Meetings of the Committee were held as follows:

- 13th March
- 17th April
- 23rd May
- 5th July
- 21st August
- 25th September

4. MEETING WITH DIGNITARIES

- The Chair met with the Ms. Judith Galambos, Deputy Head of Mission from the Embassy of the Republic of Hungary based in Nairobi, Kenya on 5th March 2018.
- The British High Commissioner – H.E. Ms. Caron Rohsler (accompanied by Mr. Matthew Harper, Political Counsellor at the High Commission) met with the Committee on 17th April 2018.
- The Committee met with the EU Ambassador - H.E. Mrs Marjaana Sall on 26th April 2018 during her working visit to Seychelles. She was accompanied by the Project Coordinator at the Embassy, Mr. Rajesh Parbooteah. The Deputy Speaker – Hon. Ahmed Afif was also in attendance to represent the Speaker.
- Mrs Monica Michel (MP) and Chairperson of the Seychelles-France Friendship Association from France, met with the Committee on Friday 27th April 2018 whilst in Seychelles during a private visit.
- The IAC Members formed part of the National Assembly team comprising of the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, LOTO, LGB, Clerk and Deputy Clerk to meet with the EU Delegation on Wednesday 7th November 2018 held at the National House Conference Room.
- The Chairperson of IAC was in attendance for the courtesy call on the Speaker by the new Chinese Ambassador – H.E. Mrs Guo Wei on 15th October 2018.

5. OTHER MEETINGS

- The IAC and the FPAC had a joint meeting with Vice President Vincent Meriton with regard to the Assumption Island issues on 9th February 2018 at State House and a visit was also effected on the island involving members from both Committees.
- The Committee had a joint meeting with the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Trade for the purpose being briefed on the Post-Cotonou Negotiations on Wednesday 23rd May 2018. Present were Ambassador Barry Faure who was accompanied by Ms. Amenda Padayachy (DG for International Relations and Regional Integration) and Mr. Marco Larson (Liaison Officer from the Division) and Ms. Cilia Mangroo – Principal Secretary for Trade.
- A team of five officials from the Trade Division Department of Trade in the Ministry of Finance, Trade, Investment and Economic Planning comprising of PS Cilia Mangroo, Mr. Charles Morin – Chief Negotiator, Mr Ricky Barbe – Senior Trade Officer, Mr Rennick Charlette – Trade Officer and Ms Veronique Brutus Trade Officer spent an afternoon for a presentation on the International Trades Agreement and Negotiation to the Committee Members on Friday 8th June 2018. Members had a chance to ask questions and clarifications obtained on their various queries.
- The Department of Trade initiated a meeting with the Committee on 12th July 2018 and Dr. Gustav Brink (a Consultant from South Africa) mandated to work on a project to implement a national legal framework for trade remedies/trade defence measures, which should allow Seychelles to establish a mechanism for anti-dumping, safeguards and countervailing measures. Dr. Brink was accompanied by Mrs Cindy Chang-Leng Clair – Principal Trade Officer, Ms. Rudy Rose – Senior Trade Officer and Ms. Cheryl Dine – Trade Officer.
- Members of the Committee were part the team that accompanied the Speaker in a meeting with the EU Delegation on 7th November 2018.
- Members of the Committee met with officials from the Trade Department on 12th December 2018 following request made by the latter for a briefing on the ongoing BREXIT negotiations.

6. OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Members of the Committee participated in various overseas missions as follows:

- 49th Session of the ACP-EU held in Brussels, Belgium from 19th to 22nd March, attended by Hon. Clifford Andre and Hon. William.
- Hon. Waven William formed part of the delegation that also comprised of Hon. Jany Letourdi and Mrs Tania Isaac – the Deputy Clerk to the 138th IPU General Assembly held in Geneva, Switzerland from 23rd to 30th March.
- 50th Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and 35th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held from 13th to 20th June in Brussels, Belgium, attended by Hon. Clifford Andre and Hon Waven William.
- Hon. Noline Sophola formed part of a delegation to participate in the Regional Symposium on Heightening the Protection for Key Populations in the SADC Region that was held in Johannesburg, South Africa from 27th to 30 August.
- Hon. Jean-Francois Ferrari attended the Africa-UK Public Accounts Committee Workshop 2018 that was held in Nairobi, Kenya from 29th August to 1st September.
- Hon. Clifford Andre and Hon. Waven William participated in the 51st Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and Inter-Sessional Meetings of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly that was held in Brussels, Belgium from 9th to 11th October.
- Hon. Clifford Andre was nominated to represent the Seychelles Parliament for the Disciplinary Committee of the SG SADC PF Hearing held in Windhoek, Namibia from 10th to 12th November.
- Hon. Waven William was part of a delegation headed by the Speaker to participate in the 139th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly and Related Meetings that was held in Geneva, Switzerland from 14th to 18th October.

- Hon. Clifford Andre and Hon. Waven William participated in the 52nd Session of the ACP Parliamentary Assembly and the 36th Session of the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly held in Cotonou, Benin from 28th November to 5th December 2018.
- Hon. Jude Valmont participated in the 2018 Annual Session of the Parliamentary Conference on the World Trade Organization (WTO) organized by the IPU held in Geneva, Switzerland from 6th to 7th December 2018.
- Just to add that the Committee, Headed by the Speaker – Hon. Nicholas Prea undertook a working visit to Mauritius in January 2019. It is to be noted that all planning for the visit was done during 2018 and the trip was funded from the saving made by the Speaker's Office 2018 budget.

7. NON-COMMITTEE RELATED OVERSEAS MISSIONS

Certain Members of the Committee participated in other overseas official missions not directly related to the Committee. The list of missions is as follows:

- Hon. Jude Valmont attended the Meeting of ACP National and Regional Authorising Officers of the East Africa Region held from 17th to 23rd March in Djibouti. The delegation was headed by Amb. Barry Faure - Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. (Mission Report submitted to the Clerk on 26th March.)
- Hon. Jean-François Ferrari represented the National Assembly of Seychelles at the *APF Réunion de la Commission des Affaires Parlementaires (CAP)* held in Brussels, Belgium from 19th to 23rd March. (Mission report submitted to the Clerk on 26th March.)
- Hon. Jean-Francois Ferrari attended a “Learning visit on Domestication and Mainstreaming Strategy for AU Instruments and Decisions into National Policies, Legal and Regulatory Frameworks held from 2nd to 5th May in Kigali, Rwanda.
- Hon. Flory Larue headed a delegation comprising of Hon. John Hoareau, Hon. Egbert Aglae and Mrs Gillian Samson to the “*Seminaire Parlementaire sur le Theme: investir dans la culture – transformer les sociétés, diversifier les économies et favoriser le*

dialogue intercultural” that took place in Antananarivo, Madagascar from 8th to 9th May.

- Hon. Ferrari proceeded to Washington DC, USA from 13th to 20th July 2018 for discussions on the US Foreign Policy.

8. FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION GROUPS

- 7.1 Friendship Association Groups have been established between Seychelles and the following countries: France, Russia, China, India, Cuba, Ghana and Algeria.
- 7.2 The Seychelles-Russia Friendship Association met with the Russian Ambassador – H.E. Mr Vladimir Belous on 21st August. Discussions were around ways to strengthen the bilateral relations between Seychelles and Russia; further assistance in the field of education and trade and exchanges between the two parliaments.

9. RECOMMENDATION

The IAC, at various committee meetings and discussions, has recommended that a special budget line be established for the Committee’s activities for the year 2020 and that this be provided for each subsequent financial year. For 2020, the IAC will make recommendations for this purpose to the Clerk of the National Assembly.

That the IAC be officially invited to take part in the negotiations of the new EU/Seychelles Fisheries Partnership Agreement that will be debated in 2019 for the new agreement that is to come into force in 2020. The IAC has repeatedly insisted on this point both with the EU visiting delegations and the Seychelles Ministry of Foreign Affairs, but with no success so far. The IAC wishes to make it clear that it will not recommend the ratification of any Fisheries Agreement if it has not been part of the negotiations.

10. CONCLUSION

The IAC believes that, in the absence of a Minister for Foreign Affairs, it has played a meaningful role in assisting the Government of Seychelles in its diplomatic obligations. The IAC, upon request from

the Speaker, has attended discussions with all foreign delegations that have visited the National Assembly.

For the months ahead, the IAC has committed itself to renew ties with the “*Association Parlementaire de la Francophonie*”, which for too long have been dormant. The IAC is assisting the National Assembly in clearing its arrears with the APF and is hoping to get back to full member status as from the beginning of 2020 when it is hoping to be able to host an event of the organization in Seychelles.

11. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

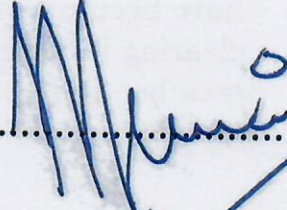
The IAC would like to thank the Speaker for his support and the secretarial staff who facilitated its work during the current year.

A special thanks for the Department of Trade for its active engagement with the Committee during 2018.

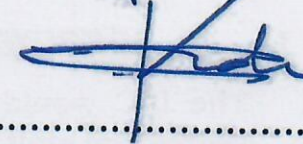
The Committee also thanks the Department of Foreign Affairs for its support.

Membership of the International Affairs Committee, 6th Assembly:

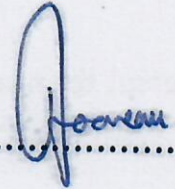
Hon. Jean-François Ferrari
Chairperson


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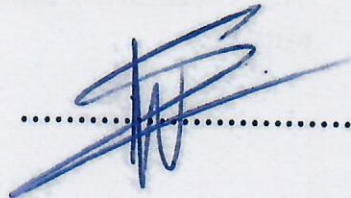
Hon. Clifford André
Vice Chairperson


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Hon. John Hoareau
Member


.....

Hon. Waven William
Member


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Hon. Noline Sophola
Member


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Hon. Jude Valmont
Member


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Hon. Flory Larue
Member


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ANNEX 1

NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF SEYCHELLES INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE (IAC) TERMS OF REFERENCE

- (i) To work closely with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, other governmental and non-governmental organizations on international affairs, peace, security and defence and contribute thereon as and when necessary.
- (ii) To maintain existing and establish new ties with foreign parliamentary organizations of interest.
- (iii) To perform any other tasks as may be assigned by the National Assembly.

