A new Executive Council took oath of office in January 2011 with two new Commissioners namely Mr. Daniel Speville and Mrs. Lordanna Meunier, and our team has been reinforced by two newly elected members after the by-election of June 2011.

Before my taking over, as Chief Commissioner, there was a general feeling of disgust and disappointment among the population due to the conflictual atmosphere that was prevailing in the different instances of the Regional Assembly. Fortunately the new Executive Council, in line with its electoral manifesto is pursuing its vision and mission of making Rodrigues a better and safer place to live. However to be able to attend to the wishes and aspiration of our population, a new style of management, guided by the new philosophy of collegial approach, coupled with the principles of good governance, have been introduced and are shown hereunder. This is also reflected in my Budget speech of 2012 and the PBB 2012.

Firstly, we managed to improve our relationship with the authorities on the main island. Our population did not appreciate the fact that the island was in regular conflicts and I clearly understood the feeling of our population. We opted for a more conciliatory approach to solve problems whenever they arise. Our island now commands a better respect within the Republic.

Secondly, we adopted a new approach to work as a team compared to a situation where decision was not taken on a collegial approach. It was not only undemocratic but contrary to our culture, we have always maintained the habit of taking decisions after close consultations with all the stakeholders. Our Council now meets each week in a very friendly atmosphere and all decisions are taken after having closely evaluated and weighed the benefits and costs of each decision. Each Commissioner can freely express his views without any fear.

Thirdly, we have been able to bring major projects that were almost abandoned to the forefront. We managed to revive some major projects which are extremely important for the development of the island and the future of our children and grandchildren. Projects like the Airport Runway Extensions, Fisheries development, Port Development, Optical cable communications, water development projects have attained a higher stage of development. I made a personal follow up on these projects and by now we have already been able to complete the airport runway feasibility study and relocation of some of the inhabitants are expected to start shortly. The five fishing vessels will also be delivered in Rodrigues in November 2011. Discussions with the Central Government are ongoing regarding our projects and many of them appear in the PBB 2012.
Fourthly, in the selection and evaluation of our projects, policies and programme, we are giving priority to projects which have a bigger impact on the vulnerable groups. This is what we mean by our pro-poor agenda. We have had discussions with major partners such as the IFAD, the Empowerment Foundation, the Trust Fund for Social Integration of the Vulnerable groups and the European Union. They are all supporting our poverty alleviation programme. It is in this context that we have been able to acquire five fishing vessels each of length 15 metres meant for the five Cooperative societies, a first in the history of Rodrigues and in the near future we will have more of these projects in the fisheries and aquaculture sector. In order to make this venture a real success we are making provision for the recruitment of a Manager in order to support this fishing venture. In addition, we have started an ambitious poverty alleviation programme in our villages to encourage the promotion of entrepreneurship. This is a first initiative in our island and we will continue with this programme. We were also in the forefront to negotiate with the Empowerment Programme for the provision of housing units for the vulnerable groups. Many projects such as the construction of track roads, children’s gardens, bus shelters are ongoing in our villages. There are many micro projects that can be implemented and we are convinced that we will be able to succeed.

Fifth, we have been able to start many infrastructure projects such as road construction and the construction of water harvesting structures. In a nutshell, I will say that we have not left any stone unturned to work for the benefit of our population.

We have also developed new relationship with our international partners. We are benefitting from the better relations. Only recently I had consultations with the UNDP and the Resident Coordinator has expressed her wish to see all UN agencies supporting Rodrigues. A Coordinator has also been designated at the UNDP for the coordination of projects funded by the UN system. The European Union will soon start its new DCP Poverty Alleviation programme and a major support would be the intervention of the EDF to support 3000 needy families.

The RRA provides a plethora of services to our population and our team will be guided by the principles of good governance. Though Mo Ibrahim Index classify Mauritius as the first country among the fifty three African countries with a Governance record, the Doing Business of the World Bank rank Mauritius 28 from among the 183 countries’, I am determined to see that we are not behind in good governance. Hence to create a good business environment, I will setup a One –Stop- Shop for the delivery of trade licenses, building permits and the issue of leases
among others. I will also ensure that procedures to obtain permit and license are published so that our clients are aware of same. We will also introduce online application as far as possible.

With hindsight, I can say that Rodrigues is now a better place to live and we will continue to work in the same direction for the best interest of our population. I am happy to say that now there is stability, genuine faith in the Administration and better relations with the authorities.

During the first sitting of this new Assembly, I expressed my wish to use all the financial resources put at our disposal efficiently and effectively for the best results on the society. We will continue to minimize all forms of wastes and ensure that we get value for money from each tendering exercise. Moreover, we will use all our assets judiciously in the best interests of the present and future generations.

It is in this context that the new PBB 2012 is being presented. It uses the same previous framework and but for financial year 2013, we will also present a separate document, that is the Strategic Plan for each Commission.

Our Programme Based Budget (PBB) 2012 elaborates on the 53 programmes grouped by Commissions along the following format:

**PART A: OVERVIEW OF THE COMMISSION**

I. Strategic Note
   
   - Mission & Strategy of each Commission
   - Major Achievements for financial year 2011
   - Major Outputs (Services to be provided for 2012-2014) by programmes and sub-programmes
   - Main constraints and challenges and how they are being addressed

II. List of programmes, Sub-programmes and priority objectives

III. Summary of Financial resources

IV. Summary of Funded positions by programmes and sub-programmes

**PART B: OUTPUT – SERVICES TO BE DELIVERED AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

(Outcomes/Delivery Units/Outputs/Performance Indicators & Targets)
PART C: INPUTS – FINANCIAL RESOURCES
- Summary by Economic Categories
- Summary for Year 2012 by Programmes and Sub-Programmes

PART D: INPUTS – HUMAN RESOURCES
- Funded positions by programmes/sub-programmes and salary categories
- Staffing (Funded Positions) By Programmes/Sub-Programmes

The famous Development economist, Walt Whitman Rostow has postulated in his economic growth model that the evolution of economic growth in any society evolve over five stages namely the traditional society, the preconditions for take-off, the take off, the drive to maturity and the age of high mass consumption. At the first stage, the economy is characterised amongst others by a limited production function which struggles in reaching the basic minimum output level. In the second stage of economic growth, where we are actually, the economy undergoes a process of change for setting the necessary pre-conditions for growth and economic take off. We are prepared for an economic growth and based on that economic growth model, this take-off stage which is the main theme of my budget is characterised by dynamic economic growth from a traditional economy to a modern economy which is the result of a sharp stimulus of economic, political or technological changes. The take-off also requires a group of entrepreneurs in the society who would induce innovation and contribute to boost economic growth. It is therefore in that spirit that we are setting the proper entrepreneurial and investment climate to boost entrepreneurial activities for the proper set up of a modern economic system.

13. Therefore the theme of this Budget shall be “Take Off Towards Sustainable Modernisation of Rodrigues”. Empirical evidence suggests that the development of a Programme Based Budget is not an easy exercise and needs to be refined over the next few years. The preparation of this PBB has been an arduous task and required a lot of efforts. I take this opportunity to thank all the officers of my Office and the Commissions who have contributed in the preparation of this PBB budget.

GAETAN JABEEMISSAR, G.O.S.K
Chief Commissioner

23 September 2011