



**SIXTH NATIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**PARLIAMENTARY  
DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**FIRST SESSION**

**THURSDAY 04 JUNE 2015**

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Hon. Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, Prime Minister, Minister of Defence, Home Affairs, KCMG, QC	Minister for Rodrigues and National Development Unit
Hon. Charles Gaëtan Xavier-Luc Duval, GCSK	Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications
Hon. Showkutally Soodhun, GCSK	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands
Hon. Ivan Leslie Collendavelloo, GCSK	Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities
Hon. Seetanah Lutchmeenaraidoo, GCSK	Minister of Finance and Economic Development
Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth	Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation
Hon. Yogida Sawmynaden	Minister of Youth and Sports
Hon. Nandcoomar Bodha	Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport
Hon. Mrs Leela Devi Dookun-Luchoomun	Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research
Hon. Anil Kumarsingh Gayan	Minister of Health and Quality of Life
Dr. the Hon. Mohammad Anwar Husnoo	Minister of Local Government
Hon. Prithvirajsing Roopun	Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment
Hon. Marie Joseph Noël Etienne Ghislain Sinatambou	Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade
Hon. Ravi Yerrigadoo	Attorney General
Hon. Mahen Kumar Seeruttun	Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security
Hon. Santaram Baboo	Minister of Arts and Culture
Hon. Ashit Kumar Gungah	Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection
Hon. Mrs Marie-Aurore Marie-Joyce Perraud	Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare
Hon. Sudarshan Bhadain	Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms
Hon. Soomilduth Bholah	Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives
Hon. Mrs Fazila Jeewa-Daureeawoo	Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform

	Institutions
Hon. Premdut Koonjoo	Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands
Hon. Jayeshwur Raj Dayal, CSK, PDSM, QPM	Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management
Hon. Marie Roland Alain Wong Yen Cheong, MSK	Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms
Hon. Soodesh Satkam Callichurn	Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training

**PRINCIPAL OFFICERS AND OFFICIALS**

Madam Speaker	Hanoomanjee, Hon. Mrs Santi Bai, GCSK
Deputy Speaker	Duval, Hon. Adrien Charles
Deputy Chairperson of Committees	Hurreeram, Hon. Mahendranuth Sharma
Clerk of the National Assembly	Lotun, Mrs Bibi Safeena
Deputy Clerk	Ramchurn, Ms Urmeelah Devi
Clerk Assistant	Gopall, Mr Navin (Temporary Transfer to RRA)
Hansard Editor	Jankee, Mrs Chitra
Serjeant-at-Arms	Pannoo, Mr Vinod

**MAURITIUS**

**Sixth National Assembly**

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**FIRST SESSION**

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**Debate No. 27 of 2015**

**Sitting of 04 June 2015**

**The Assembly met in the Assembly House, Port Louis at 11.30 a.m.**

**The National Anthem was played**

*(Madam Speaker in the Chair)*

## MOTION

### PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS - DR. MRS BIBI AMEENAH FIRDAUS GURIB-FAKIM, C.S.K. - ELECTION

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I beg to move the motion standing in my name and which reads as follows –

*“That, pursuant to section 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of Mauritius, Dr. Mrs Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim, C.S.K., be elected President of the Republic of Mauritius.”*

**The Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities (Mr I. Collendavelloo)** rose and seconded.

*On question put, the motion was agreed to.*

(Applause)

**Madam Speaker:** Hon. Members, I declare Dr. Mrs Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim, C.S.K., elected President of the Republic of Mauritius. Hon. Members will agree that this is a special historic moment for the whole country as it is the first time in our history that a woman will be holding such a high Constitutional post. On behalf of the House and in my own personal name, I offer Dr. Mrs Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim, C.S.K., my sincere congratulations and wish her a fulfilling career.

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, with your permission, I would like to say a few words on the historic occasion about Dr. Mrs Bibi Ameenah Firdaus Gurib-Fakim, the first woman to hold the Office of President of the Republic.

Madam Speaker, the election of Dr. Gurib-Fakim as President of the Republic will certainly go down in history as another landmark in my Government's relentless pursuit to place women in their rightful place in the Republic of Mauritius.

The recent appointment of the first woman as Speaker of the National Assembly and now the election of the first woman as President of the Republic constitute major milestones in our journey towards greater gender equality and empowerment of women in our country. The elevation of Dr. Gurib-Fakim to the highest office of the State will surely give a high profile voice to women in the public sphere and in the democratic life of our country.

Madam Speaker, the House will recall that, in the run-up for the last general elections, the name of Dr. Gurib-Fakim had been proposed as future President of the Republic and the proposal was acclaimed by a large majority of the population. She will therefore be the President of the People very much like we have a Government of the people. We have today not only fulfilled a pledge which we made to the nation, but we have also written one of the most glorious pages of our history by electing the first woman to the highest Constitutional office. I am particularly glad to see the smooth transition leading to her installation in office, in total conformity with the Constitutional provisions. This reflects our deep respect for our democratic institutions and the values and principles that we stand for.

Madam Speaker, as the House is aware, Dr. Gurib-Fakim is one of the leading figures in the local academia whose reputation has gone well beyond our shores. She is no doubt one of the best and brightest minds this country has produced and her impressive professional career is a perfect illustration of the triumph of hard work, courage and determination. She is a perfect role model and source of inspiration for our youth.

Dr. Gurib-Fakim started her career way back in 1987 as Lecturer at the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Mauritius. By dint of hard work and discipline, she gradually climbed the ladder to serve successively as Dean of the Faculty of Science and Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 2004 to 2010. She was until recently the Managing Director of the Centre for Phototherapy and Research and Professor of Organic Chemistry with an endowed chair at the University of Mauritius.

Dr. Gurib-Fakim has also been serving in different capacity in numerous local, regional and international organisations, *inter alia* -

- the International Council for Scientific Union;
- the Mauritius Research Council;
- the first regional research project on the inventory and study of medicinal and aromatic plants of the Indian Ocean, funded by the European Development Fund under the aegis of the Indian Ocean Commission;
- National Coordinator for the 'Indian Ocean University' funded by the European Union;
- Founding Member of the Pan African Association of African Medicinal Plants;
- Member of the Reference Group of the International Science Programme of Uppsala University, Sweden;
- Scientific Advisor to the International Foundation of Science, Stockholm;

- Member of the Expert Panel on ‘Infectious diseases’ of the Special Programme convened by the UNDP, UNICEF, WHO and the World Bank;
- Member of the Scientific Advisory Council of NTembi and Nuclear Energy Commission of South Africa, and
- Member of the International Advisory Committee for the Cyclotron project of the Indian Ocean based in Reunion (France).

Dr. Gurib-Fakim has authored or co-edited 26 books and several book chapters. She has authored numerous scientific articles and lectured extensively across the world within the field of biodiversity conservation and sustainable development. Her contribution in the protection and conservation of the environment is quite remarkable and it is a noteworthy coincidence that she will be sworn-in on 05 June when the World Environment Day is celebrated. She is also a member of the editorial boards of major journals, having served on technical committees in various capacities, including the chair of several national committees in Mauritius.

Dr. Gurib-Fakim has been elected Fellow of the Linnaean Society of London in 2007; Fellow of the Islamic Academy of Science, Jordan in 2009; Fellow of the African Science Institute in 2010 and Fellow of the African Academy of Sciences in 2013.

She received the 2007 L’Oreal-UNESCO Prize for Women in Science and Laureate of the National Economic and Social Council. She is recipient of the African Union Commission Award for “Women in Science” for the Eastern African Region in 2009.

Dr. Gurib-Fakim was elevated to the Order of the Commander of the Star and Key by the Government of Mauritius in 2008 and admitted to the Order of the *Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques* by the Government of France in 2010.

In 2013, she received the Honorary DSc (Doctor Honoris Causa) from the prestigious *Université Pierre Marie Curie* of the Sorbonne, Paris, France. In April 2014, she was elected on the Governing Council of the African Academy of Sciences as the Regional Representative of the East Africa region.

Madam Speaker, the exceptional track record of Dr. Gurib-Fakim has earned her a golden acclaim from one and all and the Mauritian people hold her in highest esteem. It is our firm belief that Dr. Gurib-Fakim has all that it takes to discharge her State duties as President of the Republic and she will rise to the challenge with her usual brilliance and distinction.

Hailing from the scientific community, Dr. Gurib-Fakim owes allegiance to no political party, but only to the State and to the people of this country. She will bring to the presidency added respect and prestige along with the decades of scientific rigour and discipline, thus giving a new dimension to the function. She will also have the opportunity of advancing the causes which are of profound concern to her, within the four corners of the Constitution.

Madam Speaker, I have every reason to believe that Dr. Gurib-Fakim will have a significant contribution to make in crafting the modern and more prosperous Mauritius which we all have envisioned and she will prove herself to be the worthy successor of the great men who have so far served at Le Réduit. I wish her well and I congratulate her heartily.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

## ADJOURNMENT

**The Prime Minister:** Madam Speaker, I beg to move that this Assembly do now adjourn to Tuesday 01 September 2015 at 11.30 a.m.

**The Deputy Prime Minister rose and seconded.**

*Question put and agreed to.*

**Madam Speaker:** The House stands adjourned.

*At 11.47 a.m. the Assembly was, on its rising, adjourned to Tuesday 01 September 2015 at 11.30 a.m.*