

**PRIZE GIVING CEREMONY
OF THE
NAMIBIAN CONSULATE CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT**

**SPEECH BY HON PRAVIND KUMAR JUGNAUTH
PRIME MINISTER**

SATURDAY 16 OCTOBER 2021 AT 1300 Hrs

VENUE: LE CHATEAU, BEL OMBRE

Colleague Ministers,

The Dean of Diplomatic Corps, Her Excellency the High Commissioner of Bangladesh in Mauritius;

Her Excellency the High Commissioner of south Africa in Mauritius;

The Honorary Consul of the Republic of Namibia,

The Representative of SAFIRE,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good afternoon.

It is an honour to be invited to this Prize Giving Ceremony of the Namibian Consulate Charity Golf Tournament.

Allow me to congratulate the winners and also all the players who participated in the tournament.

I especially wish to thank the organiser, the Namibian Consulate, for raising funds in support of a noble cause. We deeply appreciate your compassion and generosity.

I would like to seize this opportunity to send, through you, my cordial greetings and good wishes to the Government and the brotherly people of Namibia.

The recipient of this tournament's proceeds is SAFIRE, a local NGO with a mission to improve the quality of life of street children and children living in difficult circumstances.

Your contribution today will go a long way in making a difference in the lives of these children.

I commend you for your commitment to human values and your engagement in the field of child welfare.

Sadly, some children are not so fortunate as others. We believe that there is a need to ensure that all children, especially the vulnerable ones, are protected and supported so they can have the best chances in life.

We want to create a society where children are safe, where they can enjoy the warmth and security of normal family life.

To realize this noble goal, three legislations in favour of children's protection were passed at the National Assembly last year:

- The Children’s Act 2020, which gives better effect to The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child;
- The Children’s Court Act 2020 which provides for the establishment of a Children’s Court; and
- The Child Sex Offender Register Act 2020 which aims to reduce and prevent child sexual abuse.

These are expected to be proclaimed before the end of this year.

Government has set up different platforms which offer varied services to children in distress, such as the Child Protection Services, the Integrated Support Centre, the Emergency Support Services, and the Child Development Unit.

A Rehabilitation Section provides for the re-insertion of children victims of violence into their families or next-of-kin. As a measure of last resort, children who are at risk in their immediate family environment are placed in Shelters or Residential Care Institutions. Since January 2019, a Psychiatrist assists the residents suffering from psychiatric problems.

The Back-to-Home programme was set up in October/November 2018 for the reintegration of children victims of violence placed in residential care institutions, within their own family setting. Proper follow-up and the provision of psycho-social support are ensured.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mauritius is a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography since 2011.

In April 2021, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare set up a Technical Committee to explore strategies to curb the phenomenon of child pornography or of revenge pornography following reports about distribution of unauthorised photos and videos on social media.

Since April 2017, a harmonized and transparent Complaints Management System has been set up through the Citizen Support Portal, to enable citizens to register complaints online.

5,917 cases of child abuse were reported in 2020. This year from January to August, 3,231 cases of child abuse have been reported. An inquiry was conducted in each case.

Together with NGO's like SAFIRE, APEIM, Children's Foundation, CEDEM, The Shelter for Women and Children in Distress Trust Fund, L'Etoile du Berger, World Light, and Mauritius Scouts Association, Government will continue to promote children's protection, development and rights, and improve the quality of children's lives.

To conclude, I wish to thank all of you for your generosity and wish that we continue to uphold values of compassion and kindness towards children.

Thank you.
