



Speech by Idah Pswarayi-Riddihough – World Bank Country Director for Mozambique, Madagascar, Mauritius, Comoros, Seychelles

Rodrigues Airport Project Signing Ceremony

September 23, 2024 – 16:00

Labourdonnais Waterfront Hotel, Port Louis, Mauritius

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- **Honourable Dr Renganaden Padayachy, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning, and Development**
 - **Mr. Franceau Aubret Grancourt, G.O.S.K, Chief Commissioner Rodrigues Regional Assembly**
 - **Mr Premode Neerunjun, Secretary to Cabinet and Head of Civil Service, Prime Minister’s Office**
 - **H.E. Mr. Albert Camille Vital, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps**
 - **H.E. Mr. Oskar Benedikt, Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and to the Republic of Seychelles**
 - **Members of the Diplomatic Corps**
 - **Governor, Bank of Mauritius**
 - **Representatives of Development Partners**
 - **Members of the Press**
 - **Distinguished guests**
 - **Dear colleagues**
 - **Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is with great pleasure that I join you today to witness the signing of the Rodrigues Plaine Corail Airport Project. This project marks an important development step for Rodrigues Island, and for Mauritius as a whole.



The infrastructure that will be developed, and all the other accompanying sectoral development that will maximize the value of the airport, are important drivers of growth. The future just got a bit brighter.

Designing and developing a project of this size requires the involvement of many different stakeholders. And many different agencies, people, and stakeholders have indeed been involved along the process.

I would like to acknowledge and thank them for all their efforts. In particular, I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Prime Minister, Honorable Mr. Pravind Jugnauth; to the Minister of Finance, Dr. the Honorable Renganaden Padayachy; to the Government of Mauritius, the Rodrigues Administration, and the European Union for their invaluable partnership in this endeavor.

This project will open doors to better connectivity, unlocking economic opportunities that will empower local communities and strengthen the ties between Rodrigues and Mauritius, and eventually with regional partners. Open skies build connectivity, business, and prosperity through job creation, tourism, and resilience against climate challenges.

We are committed to continuing to work closely with local authorities to balance economic growth with environmental preservation. This project is designed with eco-friendly principles at its core, setting high standards for green airport operations and protecting the island's unique natural beauty and rich culture for generations to come.

This means investing also in essential sectors such as water resources management, wastewater treatment and agricultural production. Our objective is that Rodrigues is left in a position where its resources are in a better condition than when we started – and that people's lives are better.



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At the World Bank Group, we remain deeply committed to supporting Mauritius's and Rodrigues' inclusive and resilient growth. Our collaboration with the Government of Mauritius, the Rodrigues Administration, and our partners reflects our shared commitment to driving sustainable development that benefits all levels of society.

Today, we take another meaningful step on the path to a stronger, more prosperous, and sustainable Rodrigues Island.

Thank you once again to all partners involved, and I look forward to the continued growth and success of this beautiful island and its people.

Thank you!