



Confédération des Travailleurs du Secteur Privé

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OPEN LETTER TO MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT

Sir/Madam

A new government has been elected on the 10th of December 2014 and you have been chosen by The People to govern us for the next five years. The astonishing outcome of the election was as a result of the People saying « enough is enough » to an abusive and unjust regime. Will you help perpetuate this habit or are you in office to perform otherwise ? We are now almost a year later and there still are so many inequalities in our Country.

You are surely aware that on the 25th of September 2015, the 193 countries of the UN General Assembly adopted the 2030 Development Agenda titled *Transforming our world*. Mauritius committed itself to achieve 17 goals as set out in the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) for 2015-2030. The first goal is to **end poverty in all its forms everywhere** and the eighth one is to **promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all**.

In line with this, on Friday 9th of October 2015 the Cabinet gave its green light to the Good Governance and Integrity Bill. It will speak of good governance, equal opportunity for all.

How will you as Members of Parliament strive to achieve the above mentioned goals and also to contribute to effective good governance in the Country ? You must surely already know that workers have been struggling to resolve their problems on so many fronts? Continuing to turn a deaf ear to those workers will come back to haunt you at the next election.

Consequently, the Confederation des Travailleurs du Secteur Privé (CTSP) have the following queries for you:

1. Precarious employment of 500 women Cleaners in primary and secondary government schools.
2. Injustice towards 750 employees of Airmate

1. Precarious employment of 500 women Cleaners

Those women are on contract and they do not benefit from all the acquired rights that most workers in formal employment enjoy ; local and sick leave, end of year bonus, salary compensation, maternity leaves etc. Since September 2015 they earn Rs2000-3000 monthly. They clean toilets and the school yard so that our children can thrive in a healthy and safe environment.

The most aberrant fact is that they work in Government primary and secondary schools. While Teachers, Head Masters, Ushers are employed by Government, the cleaners work for the PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) or for Job Contractors.

- Those working for PTAs are paid by cheque every month, They receive neither a payslip nor a contract of employment although the Employment Rights Act as amended in June 2013 states this obligation for the employer.

The job is of a permanent nature. They have worked for more than 2 years (in some cases more than 5 years), yet they are still on Contract of Determined Duration (CDD).

- Those recruited by Job Contractors face the horrible threat of non renewal of contract every two or three years. Therefore, they do not have a sustainable job where they can strive for a better life for themselves and their children.

The CTSP has had many meetings with the former Minister of Education ; the last one was in November 2014 and in the presence of Mr Ramlagun who is still in office.

The decision was taken verbatim to recruit all those workers and to do away with their precarious situation. However, the general election put a new regime in place and promises were never fulfilled.

The new Minister of Education gave an attentive ear to our request but was unhelpful. She contends that she did not receive the necessary budget from the Minister of Finance to be able to employ those workers. The CTSP was quite surprised to see the Ministry's Education Communique in April 2015 (*See Annex A*).

Our Government had allegedly no funds to employ those 500 women but in **September 2015** two new Job Contractors were awarded the contracts for the cleaning of the premises in Government schools namely : (*See Annex B*)

- (1) The director of *Mauriclean Ltd* is a resident of circonscription Number 8, a well known well wisher of the actual ruling group.
- (2) The *Professional Cleaners Group Ltd* has been awarded another part of the contract. We fail to understand how a Company with less than 2 years of existence has been awarded the contract when according to statutory requirement; only companies over 2 years of existence are supposed to bid.

Under the previous government, it was *Capital Security* , among others, that had the contracts. Do we have to conclude that your Government means to perpetuate the habits of the former one?

The Contract has been awarded for a period of 3 years (2015-2018) and costs Rs76,794,106.90.

On top of all the Job Contractors are supposed to employ 2 Cleaners per school, but such is not the case as in almost all schools 1 Cleaner only has been given a new contract to work for 3 hours a day on scattered hours. The work is physically demanding.

The Ministry of Education has paid over Rs76 million and has not even verify whether these workers are benefitting a proper salary. These workers if recruited

on a part time basis should have benefitted from Rs4735.50 but instead are paid between Rs1500 to Rs3000 only.

2. Job Security for 750 young employees of Airmate

In 2006 Air Mauritius Ltd decided to set up another company under the name of Airmate. This new company, owned solely by Air Mauritius Ltd, was supposedly created to operate as a call centre only. However, from 2007 it has changed its initial goal. Following the hedging problems, Air Mauritius Ltd delegated recruitment of workers (Attendants, Checking Clerk, Administrative Cadres etc) to Airmate where they are paid lower salaries and have unfavorable conditions of work. However, they were and are still performing the same jobs as their colleagues employed by Air Mauritius Ltd ; same job, unequal conditions.

Following many representations, demonstration and public awareness on the discrimination faced by these 750 employees, the new government decided to conduct an HR Audit at Air Mauritius Ltd and Airmate. This exercise was completed at the end of August 2015.

Air Mauritius Ltd. committed itself to freeze all redundancy pending the finalization of the HR Audit. However, about 100 youths employment have already been terminated and meanwhile Airmate has started to advertise new job offers.

CTSP's Appeal:

1. We call on you as Members of Parliament to put an end to the injustice being perpetuated towards these women cleaners in Government Primary and Secondary schools. They deserved to be employed on the permanent establishment of the Ministry of Education just like their colleagues. **STOP THIS DISCRIMINATION.** There should not be two categories of workers in a Government establishment.
2. We call on you as Members of Parliament to resolve the case of 750 young employees of Airmate. They should be under the umbrella of Air Mauritius Ltd with the same terms and conditions of employment. We believe there is a way for a just transition to that status.

While The People pay you to do the job you have been elected for, will you ignore us?

Do you have the will, if not the decency, whether you are in the Opposition or in the Government to resolve these matters?

The decision is yours if you want a JUST MAURITIUS but remember, The People do not forget.

Yours truly

Jane Ragoo and Reez Chuttoo
Spokesperson CTSP

15th October 2015