No: 393/2011 MMG/HR/28/1

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva presents its compliments to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and with reference to its Note (Ref. GVA 0720) dated 22 November 2011 requesting relevant information to Resolution 18/2 entitled “Preventable Material Mortality and Morbidity and Human Rights”, has the honour to enclose herewith the submissions of the Government of Mauritius.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Mauritius to the United Nations Office and other International Organisations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 28 December 2011

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations Office
Palais des Nations
Geneva

Fax: (022) 917 9008
Ministry of Health and Quality of Life

Inputs on
Human Rights Council Resolution 18/2-
“Preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and Human rights”

➢ “Access to health” is a fundamental right to all the citizens of Mauritius, including pregnant women. Maternal Health within the Sexual and reproductive health service delivery is a core function of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life (MOH & QL) of Mauritius.

➢ The reproductive health and Maternal & Child Health services are integrated into the general health services and are provided free of charge through a network of accessible health care delivery institutions at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

Antenatal Care is available in all the Area Health Centres, Community Health Centres and at the Regional Hospitals where all deliveries take place as well as complicated cases managed. All pregnant women are taken care of by qualified midwives and obstetricians. Complicated and High Risks Patients cases are seen early by Obstetricians.

All laboratory facilities exist for routine and specific investigations. Ultrasonography is routine performed and this facility also exists in many Area Health Centres.

The maternity services are backed by an efficient Blood Bank and Transfusion Unit.

➢ The Government of Mauritius is ensuring that all relevant sectors and stakeholders promote Sexual and Reproductive Health through the provision of quality information and services. Mauritius has made great strides in uplifting the health and social status of the population.

➢ Our national objective is to achieve the lowest possible incidence (elimination point) of infant and maternal mortality. The strategies and activities include:

• Improved maternal and nutritional status of mother,
• 100% coverage of antenatal and post-natal care,
• IEC (Information, Education and Communication) on birth control to be improved particularly among adolescents and youth and high risk groups,
• Emphasis on birth control during post-natal care,
• Improved access to Family Planning Services,
• Information on the negative effects of termination of pregnancy under unhygienic conditions, and to direct women towards effective methods of birth control,
• Countrywide detection test for cervical and breast cancer, and
• Prevent new infection and continue caring and supporting people affected by HIV/AIDS
The maternal mortality rate (MMR) in Republic of Mauritius is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2002</th>
<th>2003</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2005</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of Maternal Deaths</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MMR</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Government of Mauritius has also made various commitments that have enabled Sexual and Reproductive Health to become a priority focus:

- The Millennium Declaration specifying the Millennium Development Goals to be achieved by 2015.
- Vision 2020 and the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) which set targets to be achieved by African countries for realistic socio economic development.
- The SADC Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy 2006-2015, has recommendations for achieving the SRH in the SADC region.
- Mauritius was a signatory to the AU, Maputo plan of Action that calls for strategies to ensure universal access to SRH.

The Government is revitalizing its Sexual and Reproductive Health Programme and in 2007, a national SRH Policy was formulated where twelve key areas for intervention were enunciated:

- Family Planning
- Infertility
- Safe Motherhood including Breastfeeding
- Abortion
- Infant and Child Health
- Adolescent and Youth Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Sexually Transmitted Infections, HIV and AIDS
- Malignancies of the Reproductive Tract, Cancer of Breast and Concerns
- Gender and Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Male Involvement and participation in Sexual and Reproductive Health
- Male Sexual Dysfunction
- Geriatrics
Presently, a National Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy and Plan of Action 2009-2015 is being implemented. The goal is: 'To contribute to the national efforts towards the improvement of the sexual and reproductive health status of all men, women and young people living in Mauritius and to improve the survival of newborn babies and the health status of all children in Mauritius by 2015'. Five strategies have been identified in order to strengthen our reproductive health programme and are as follows: legal and policy review, advocacy and IEC/BCC, capacity building, service delivery and research.

Thus, the Sexual and Reproductive Health Strategy is operationalizing the objectives set out in national, regional and international policies, frameworks and declarations. For instance, the SRH strategy is operationalising the ICPD Plan of Action to provide the strategic focus for maintaining MDG 5 and the attainment of MDGs 4 and 6.

A workshop was held on 14 December 2011 at the Mauritius Institute of Health for the proposal of a study on an ongoing Nationwide Maternal deaths and Near Miss Cases in Mauritius. Participants included both private and public officers. It was proposed that all maternal death was to be reviewed and guidelines set to improve antenatal care.

This study will be under the responsibility of an independent national committee empowered under the law to conduct such a study and publish an annual report.

The aim of the national committee is to generate information that will contribute to the health of women and children by carrying out an ongoing study of all maternal death and near miss cases and by disseminating the findings and recommendations.

This study will start by the end of January 2012.

20 December 2011