

## **“INTENTIONAL DESTRUCTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE AS A VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS”**

We are against the Intentional destruction of Culture Heritage. This is clearly indicated by our adherence to UN Conventions on Cultural and Heritage Issues. The National Heritage Fund of Mauritius is responsible for the collection, preservation and dissemination of our heritage.

Destruction of tangible cultural heritage leads to the disappearance of concrete evidence of history. The intangible cultural heritage attached to these monuments, sites, buildings will also disappear. Thus the attachment to a symbol of cultural significance will also loosen. Tangible Cultural Property and Intangible Cultural Property are complementary.

Destruction in any form is vehemently condemned. Mauritius designated twelve religious sites as National Heritage in 2016, comprising Churches, Mosque, Temples etc. This shows the spiritual maturity of the Mauritian Society and the spirit of tolerance, appreciation and mutual understandings that sustains the Nation. These vestiges belong to the Nation.

The diversity of our cultures is promoted and sustained through artistic and cultural actions at all levels starting from home to university. The sense of belongingness and pride in our heritage is the main motivating factor that keep our people together.

With Cultural Rights, there are also cultural obligations, this is how we ensure the perennity of our values and practices for the common welfare of our people. Awareness and education have to be accentuated to enable the population to appreciate and safeguard our shared values and cultural heritage.

A new mindset is required in the 21<sup>st</sup> century on the protection and preservation of our Cultural Heritage and Values. Wars and conflicts are destructive and a permanent threat to our monuments and cultural sites. The lust of man has to be controlled and cultural diplomacy is the way out.