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ACTION SS-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AF-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	A-00	ACQ-00
	CA-01	CCO-00	CG-00	CIAE-00	COME-00	CTME-00	INL-00
	USNW-00	DINT-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	UTED-00	VC-00	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	INSE-00	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	VCE-00	M-00	AC-01
	DCP-01	NRCE-00	NSAE-00	NSCE-00	OCS-03	OIC-02	OMB-01
	PA-00	PC-01	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SCT-00
	SP-00	IRM-00	SSO-00	TEST-00	IAP-00	TRSE-00	T-00
	USIE-00	USSS-00	ASDS-01	EPAE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	DRL-02
	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/015W			

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P 091207Z NOV 01  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7409  
INFO SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
SECDEF WASHDC  
DIA WASHDC

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 PORT LOUIS 001314

SENSITIVE

DEPT FOR P, AF/E, AF/PD AND PM/ISO

E.O. 12958: DECL: N/A

TAGS: PREL, PTER, PINR, MP

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PAGE 02      PORT L 01314 01 OF 02 091208Z  
SUBJECT: TFUS01: MAURITIAN GOVERNMENT COMMENTS ON WAR  
AGAINST TERRORISM

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: MAURITIAN NEWSPAPERS HAVE FEATURED THIS WEEK A VIRTUAL PUBLIC DUEL BETWEEN FOREIGN MINISTER ANIL GAYAN AND PRESIDENT CASSAM UTEEM OVER MAURITIAN FOREIGN POLICY. FM GAYAN HAS CONSISTENTLY VOICED THE OFFICIAL POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT OF MAURITIUS AS LED BY PRIME MINISTER ANEROOD JUGNAUTH, NAMELY, THAT MAURITIUS SUPPORTS THE WORLDWIDE COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM AND THE USG-LED MILITARY ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN. THE MOST RECENT INTERVIEW OF PRESIDENT UTEEM, HOWEVER, REFUTES GAYAN'S STACE ON FOREIGN POLICY, AND RATCHETS UP THE TENOR OF DISCOURSE BETWEEN TO TWO -- TO A SHRILL DIN, BY

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MAURITIAN STANDARDS. AN UNRELATED AND TEMPORARILY SUPPRESSED THEME IN FOREIGN POLICY DISCOURSE HERE IS THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE ISLAND OF DIEGO GARCIA, WHICH GAYAN HAS PERIODICALLY RAISED IN PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH THE CHARGE AND IN INTERVIEWS WITH THE PRESS. GAYAN DODGED COMMENTS IN THIS WEEK'S PRESS (BUT NOT IN BILATERAL MEETINGS); UTEEM DECLARED THE ISLAND UNDER FOREIGN "OCCUPATION". END SUMMARY.

2. (U) ON NOVEMBER 4 AT A CEREMONY ATTENDED BY THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND THE PUBLIC, PRESIDENT CASSAM UTEEM PUBLICLY CRITICIZED THE USG-LED MILITARY ACTIONS IN AFGHANISTAN. AT THE CEREMONY, THE MAYOR OF PORT LOUIS, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND PRIME MINISTER EACH ARTICULATED FIRM SUPPORT FOR THE WORLDWIDE COALITION AGAINST TERRORISM. A FEW DAYS LATER, ON NOVEMBER 7, FM GAYAN AGAIN DISTANCED THE GOM FROM UTEEM'S

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COMMENTS.

3. (U) IN AN INTERVIEW WITH THE FRENCH LANGUAGE DAILY "LE MAURICIEN," (11/7) GAYAN DECLARED THAT THE GOM WAS "AGAINST TERRORISM, AGAINST THE FINANCING OF TERRORISM, AND AGAINST ALL GOVERNMENTS WHICH SUPPORT OR FINANCE TERRORISM. WE ARE ON THE COALITION'S SIDE AGAINST TERRORISM. WE WILL SUPPORT THE UN RESOLUTIONS PROHIBITING ALL FORMS OF ASSISTANCE AND COLLABORATION WITH TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS LIKE AL-QAIDA, A RESOLUTION THAT WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IMMEDIATELY AFTER ITS ADOPTION. AS FOR THE BOMBING (SORTIES) IN AFGHANISTAN, WE BELIEVE THAT THEY ARE NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE TALIBANS' REFUSAL TO TURN OSAMA BIN LADEN OVER TO THE AUTHORITIES WHO COULD BRING HIM TO JUSTICE. THE TALIBAN ARE OFFICIALLY SUPPORTING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM, WHICH HAS CAUSED THE DEATH OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS, NOT ONLY IN THE U.S., BUT ALSO IN AFRICA, NOTABLY IN NAIROBI AND DAR ES SALAAM. THEY HAVE A NETWORK IN MANY COUNTRIES. WE HAVE TO DEAL NOW WITH A GOVERNMENT THAT SUPPORTS THE TERRORIST ACTIONS OF A GROUP LIKE AL-QAIDA. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, A WAR AGAINST THE TALIBAN IS JUSTIFIED . . . . OBVIOUSLY WE DEPLORE THE LOSS OF HUMAN LIFE. AS I SAID IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WE WILL GIVE OUR FULL SUPPORT TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE TO THE UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL NGO HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO AFGHANISTAN." . . . ASKED WHETHER ONE MUST LINK THE DENUNCIATION OF TERRORISM WITH THE SITUATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST, FM GAYAN RESPONDED NEGATIVELY, "IT IS PURE OPPORTUNISM ON BIN LADEN'S PART TO TRY TO LINK HIS TERRORIST ACTION WITH THE SITUATION OF

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PALESTINE. IF THE TWO ARE LINKED, WHY DID PRESIDENT  
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ARAFAT CONDEMN TERRORISM AND AGREE TO DONATE HIS OWN  
BLOOD TO THE VICTIMS OF THE ATTACKS IN NY AND  
WASHINGTON?"

4. (U) IN THE NOVEMBER 9-15 EDITION OF THE ENGLISH  
LANGUAGE "NEWS ON SUNDAY," PRESIDENT CASSAM UTEEM  
REFERRED TO THE USG-LED WAR ON TERRORISM IN AFGHANISTAN  
AS "HARDLY VEILED TERRORIST ACTIONS," AND AS AN  
"UNJUSTIFIABLE ACTION." UTEEM REPORTEDLY BECAME  
"INCENSED" THAT FM GAYAN DISMISSED UTEEM'S ROLE IN POLICY  
FORMULATION WHEN HE DECLARED THAT "THE FOREIGN POLICY OF  
MAURITIUS WAS MADE IN PORT LOUIS, AND NO WHERE ELSE," A  
VEILED ALLUSION TO THE SUBURBAN LOCATION OF THE  
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE. THIS IS THE THIRD TIME THAT  
PRESIDENT UTEEM HAS SPOKEN OUT AGAINST THE WAR IN  
AFGHANISTAN. HE HAS IN THE PAST FOCUSED HIS REMARKS ON  
"THE SUFFERING INNOCENT CHILDREN" OF AFGHANISTAN. THE  
"NEWS ON SUNDAY" INTERVIEW SWIPES MORE DIRECTLY AT THE  
USG, ALLUDING TO USG-PROMOTED SANCTIONS ON IRAQ AND CUBA  
AS WELL AS TO OTHER USG-LED MILITARY ACTIONS. WE PROVIDE  
BELOW THE FULL TEXT OF RELEVANT PORTIONS OF THE UTEEM  
INTERVIEW.

5. (U) ASKED TO ELABORATE ON HIS OBJECTION TO THE BOMBING  
IN AFGHANISTAN, UTEEM SAID ". . . . AS HOS OF MY COUNTRY,  
I . . . WILL SAY WHAT I FEEL SHOULD BE SAID AND HOW IT  
SHOULD BE SAID BEARING IN MIND THE INTEREST OF THE WHOLE  
POPULATION OF MAURITIUS AND IN THE NAME OF INTERNATIONAL

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	G-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00	/015W			

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AGAINST TERRORISM

JUSTICE, ESPECIALLY NOW THAT THE UN SECURITY COUNCIL HAS  
CHOSEN TO ALLOW OTHERS TO PLAY THE ROLE THAT SHOULD  
NORMALLY HAVE BEEN ITS OWN. . . . THE BOMBING OF  
AFGHANISTAN IS NOT THE FIRST ISSUE THAT PROMPTED ME TO  
RAISE MY VOICE AGAINST WHAT I CONSIDER TO BE AN INJUSTICE  
OR UNJUSTIFIABLE ACTION. I HAVE DONE SO ON OTHER  
OCCASIONS, NOTABLY WHEN I BELIEVED THAT ECONOMIC  
SANCTIONS IMPOSED ON A COUNTRY WERE ADVERSELY AFFECTING  
WOMEN AND CHILDREN OR THAT INDISCRIMINATE ATTACKS AGAINST  
ANOTHER WERE LEADING TO A LARGE NUMBER OF CIVILIAN  
CASUALTIES. . . . AS RIGHTLY POINTED OUT BY PRESIDENT  
CHIRAC OF FRANCE RECENTLY, I ALSO BELIEVE THAT MILITARY  
ACTION IN AFGHANISTAN ALONE IS NOT THE SOLUTION TO THE  
PROBLEM OF TERRORISM AND THAT IT SHOULD BE BACKED UP BY  
OTHER NON-VIOLENT MEANS. WE HAVE ALL CONDEMNED IN NO  
UNCERTAIN TERMS THE DASTARDLY ATTACKS AGAINST THE WTC IN  
NY AND THE PENTAGON IN WASHINGTON. THOUSANDS OF INNOCENT  
LIVES HAVE BEEN TAKEN AWAY BY THE TERRORISTS. BUT WHO  
CAN AGREE TO THE FACT THAT A FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM,  
JUSTIFIES OTHER HARDLY VEILED TERRORIST ACTIONS? HOW  
LONG CAN WE ALL REMAIN PASSIVE AND SILENT WITNESSES OF  
THE TERRIBLE PLIGHT OF SO MANY INNOCENT CIVILIANS? THE  
WAR ON TERROR CANNOT BE FOUGHT BY TERROR. . . . IF AS  
EVIDENCE SEEMS TO INDICATE, OSAMA BIN LADEN WAS BEHIND  
THE SEPTEMBER 11 ATTACKS ON THE NY TWIN TOWERS, HE SHOULD  
BE BROUGHT TO RESPOND BEFORE A COURT OF LAW. BUT THEN,  
MAY I ASK HOW MANY INNOCENT VICTIMS THE WORLD IS PREPARED

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TO ACCEPT WITHOUT TURNING A HAIR, FOR ONE BIN LADEN?"

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6. (U) ON DIEGO GARCIA, UTEEM STATED, " . . . WE HAVE BEEN TRYING HARD THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS AND AT INTERNATIONAL FOR A TO HAVE OUR SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO RECOGNIZED. BUT SO FAR, THIS DISPUTE HAS UNFORTUNATELY NOT BEEN RESOLVED. THE CHAGOS ARCHIPELAGO, INCLUDING AND ESPECIALLY DIEGO GARCIA, STILL REMAINS 'OCCUPIED TERRITORY'. . . . MAURITIUS, AS A COUNTRY, HAS ONLY FRIENDS IN THE WORLD AND WE ARE AT PEACE WITH ALL OF THEM. WE THEREFORE RESENT THE FACT THAT PART OF OUR TERRITORY SHOULD BE USED WITHOUT OUR CONSENT, FOR MILITARY PURPOSES."

7. (SBU) MAURITIAN AND THIRD COUNTRY CONTACTS INSIST THAT THE LOCAL AUDIENCE TO WHOM UTEEM IS ATTEMPTING TO APPEAL IS A NEGLIGIBLE MINORITY, YET UTEEM PERSISTS. HIS COMMENTS NOVEMBER 4 WERE MADE IN KREOLE, THE UNIVERSALLY-SPOKEN UNOFFICIAL LANGUAGE OF MAURITIUS. THE NOS INTERVIEW WAS CONDUCTED ENTIRELY IN ENGLISH AND WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE ANOTHER AUDIENCE IN MIND. PERHAPS UTEEM SEEKS WIDER FOREIGN RECOGNITION FOR HIS DEFIANT POSTURE. IN EITHER EVENT, HE HAS SUCCEEDED IN CENTERING DISCUSSION OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM ON THE USG RATHER THAN ON TERRORISM.

8. (SBU) UTEEM REQUESTED A MEETING WITH THE CHARGE FOR TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 13. CHARGE WILL EXPRESS OUR DISSATISFACTION WITH UTEEM'S CHARACTERIZATION OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT WISH TO PASS ANY ADDITIONAL MESSAGE, PLEASE RELAY PRIOR TO 9:00 A.M. MAURITIAN TIME.

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