



COMMUNIQUE FROM C.H.A.R.M. Vic

The tragedy unfolding in Mauritius has dominated world news since the 25th July 2020, after the MV (Merchant Vessel) Wakashio grounded on coral reefs in the south-east of the Indian Ocean. Sadly, after the ship sat there for over a week, cracks emerged in its hull and fuel oil leaked into the expansive lagoon outside the coastal village of Mahébourg. Striking satellite images show the resulting oil spill weaving a black slick between the mainland at Pointe D'Esny and the flat round island of Ile-aux-Aigrettes. On August 7, nearly two weeks after the shipwreck, the government declared the incident [a national emergency](#).

Recent reports highlight it is very difficult to predict how severe the medium to long term impacts will be in Mauritius and how well the environment might recover. Such spills are toxic to plants and animals including the mangrove forests and the corals that build reefs. The harm to marine life is great and the ecological effects flow onto interconnected marine and land ecosystems.

In view of the evolving ecological disaster impacting the people of Mauritius, the Cultural Historical Association of Rodriguans and Mauritians in Victoria (C.H.A.R.M) approached the City of Greater Dandenong to request for the outside of the [Drum Theatre](#) building to be illuminated in the colours of the flag of Mauritius. C.H.A.R.M is pleased to advise this request was approved. The illumination of the Drum Theatre will take place from Monday 14 to Sunday 20 September 2020.

This symbolic gesture of solidarity and support for the people of Mauritius during this difficult time, recognises the courage, innovation, dedication and solidarity of the thousands of volunteers whose efforts to contain the worst oil spill in the history of Mauritius made news around the world.

C.H.A.R.M would like to express its gratitude to the City of Greater Dandenong in its solidarity with [people of Mauritian background living in its municipality](#). C.H.A.R.M invites all Mauritians in Victoria to symbolically light a candle at home or post a candle online to remember lives lost and unite in spirit with those directly impacted by this unfortunate disaster and those working relentlessly to save what can be saved, minimise the environmental impact which in turn impacts on the livelihoods of many in the local areas directly affected.

You may wish to visit the illuminated site if it is safe to do so within the parameter of current restrictions.

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Cultural Historical Association of Rodriguans and Mauritians in Victoria Inc.

PO Box 708, Endeavour Hills 3802, Tel: 0418 367 417

Email: president@charm.org.au

Website: www.charm.org.au ABN No 98 909 416 198

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