



Foreign Affairs Department Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism Republic of Seychelles

Leko Diplomatie

PROMOTING A PROACTIVE FOREIGN POLICY

January 2025, Issue 14

The First Seychelles-European Partnership Dialogue

After a decade of successful EU-Seychelles Political Dialogues, this year saw the beginning of a new era for diplomatic relations between the Seychelles and countries of the European Union.

The First Seychelles-European Partnership Dialogue was co-hosted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Mr Sylvestre Radegonde and the Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E Mr Oskar Benedikt.

The event, held at Eden Bleu Hotel, saw the participation of eight Seychelles Ministers as well as Ambassadors and representatives from nine EU Member states.



Souvenir photo of the First Seychelles-European Partnership Dialogue

What's inside?

The 1st Seychelles-European Partnership Dialogue – **Pages 01 - 03**

The Diplomatic Circle - **Pages 03 - 05**

Activities attended by FAD overseas - **Pages 06 - 09**

Five Minutes with a Diplomat - **Page 10**

Training Sessions and FAD's Social Engagements - **Pages 11 - 12**

Our Staff Activities and Others - **Page 12**

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During his opening remarks, Minister Sylvestre Radegonde, stated: *"The inaugural Seychelles-European Union (EU) Partnership Dialogue, held under the Samoa Agreement will shape the partnership between the EU and the Organisation of African, Caribbean, and Pacific States (OACPS) over the next 20 years. It is a crucial framework for building a sustainable, peaceful, and inclusive future."*

"Les Seychelles considèrent l'UE comme un partenaire clé dans la promotion du développement durable, de la stabilité régionale et des initiatives liées à l'économie bleue au sein de la Commission de l'océan Indien (COI). À travers une collaboration accrue en matière de sécurité maritime, de résilience climatique et de pêche durable, nous visons à renforcer la prospérité régionale tout en protégeant nos ressources marines."



...Continues from page 1

The Ambassador of the European Union to the Republic of Seychelles, Mr Oskar Benedikt, stated: *“In an ever-changing world, mutually fruitful cooperation is not an option; it is a must. We have to work together, join efforts and put solidarity at the top of our agenda. As we strive to secure the future of the forthcoming generations, let us work together to give them a healthy, fairer and safer planet where everyone can leave in peace, freed from any form of violence. We will continue to stand for multilateralism and a rules-based order with the UN Charter and international law at its core. We have an ongoing constructive partnership with the Republic of Seychelles in economic development, security, climate change and environment as well as governance and human rights. In all these areas, our cooperation with various stakeholders in Seychelles is effective and is delivering concrete results to the benefit of populations in Seychelles and beyond. I look forward to scaling up our partnership to address current challenges and prepare for the future ones.”*



Topics discussed during the First Seychelles-European Partnership Dialogue

SECURITY

Both sides recalled their steadfast commitment to addressing maritime threats in the region, building on the operations of the two regional centres based in Seychelles and Madagascar and their solid alliances with regional and international organisations. They welcomed the signature of the new EU-funded Safe Seas Africa programme in July 2024 to scale up their action for regional maritime security building on the ‘acquis’ of the MASE programme.

ECONOMY

Recalling that the EU remains the main trading partner for Seychelles, the main source of Foreign Direct Investment and the main source of tourists for Seychelles, the EU reiterated its commitment to continue supporting Seychelles economic pillars notably tourism, fisheries and trade.

Highlighting the importance of the Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement and the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in support of solid trade relations and a dynamic fisheries sector, both sides reiterated their commitment to the sustainable management of oceans in particular in the framework of the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission. The EU-Seychelles Sustainable Fisheries Partnership Agreement benefits local communities, fosters the development of Seychelles’ fisheries policy and promotes the sustainability dimension. The partnership also supports the fight against IUU (Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated) fishing as a key action to protect marine resources.

The EU commended Seychelles’ active participation in the negotiations for the deepening of the Economic Partnership Agreement and both look forward to the successful completion of the negotiation process in the near future.

Confirming the additional grant allocated to Seychelles for the extension and modernisation of Port Victoria, a project supported under a Team Europe approach to the amount of 77 million euros, the EU reiterated its commitment to the smooth implementation of this strategic project for Seychelles economic development.

Seychelles acknowledged the commitment of the EU, the European Investment Bank’s (EIB) and the *Agence Française de Développement* interest in making the Port extension project a reality.

CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENT

The parties reiterated their joint engagement to achieve ambitious and strong commitments at the next COP for in Azerbaijan. Highlighting the need to access climate funding, they also welcomed the recent accreditation of the Indian Ocean Commission to the Green Climate Fund. The EU commended Seychelles vision to develop a circular economy and was ready to provide assistance as part of the new bilateral cooperation programme – ENSEL.

As regards to biodiversity, they both confirmed their commitment to the Kunming-Montreal Global Diversity Framework adopted in 2022. The EU also highlighted that Seychelles was among the selected Small Island Developing States (SIDS) included in a specific demarche on biodiversity as a clear signal of the leadership role that Seychelles plays in this context. Seychelles called for further efforts to be undertaken at international level to scale up funding for climate crisis mitigation. The same level of importance should be placed to halt the loss of biodiversity as it is being placed towards climate action. In this regard, Seychelles will continue to advocate for funding mechanisms which aim to address the vulnerabilities of SIDS. Consequently, Seychelles calls for wider commitment of the EU member states to support the implementation of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) and amplify the efforts to accelerate the operationalisation of the Loss and Damage Fund.

The EU commended Seychelles for embarking on a national strategy for a circular economy and confirmed its readiness to assist Seychelles in this area.

GOVERNANCE

Underlining the importance of taxation governance, the EU commended the steadfast commitment of Seychelles to ensure that it is a reliable jurisdiction in the area of taxation. The EU confirmed that work is ongoing with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) to provide Seychelles with the necessary support to implement necessary reforms for the supplementary review scheduled in 2025. Seychelles welcomed the support that the EU is providing to the OECD to ensure that Seychelles is ready for the supplementary review in 2025.

Underlining the importance of gender equality, the EU congratulated Seychelles on the appointment of the first female Commissioner of Prison. The EU also commended Seychelles on its action to promote the rights of LGBTIQ people. Seychelles apprised the EU on the fight against gender-based violence (GBV) and on the progress made on antidiscrimination.

The Diplomatic Circle

Representatives of Foreign States Accredited to Seychelles



High Commissioner-designate of the Republic of Ghana to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Mrs. Francisca Ashietey-Odunton met with Principal Secretary Vivianne Fock Tave ahead of her Accreditation



Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Ireland to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E. Nicola Brennan-Brugha met with Principal Secretary Vivianne Fock Tave ahead of her Accreditation



H.E. Mr. Henk Jan Bakker, the Ambassador-designate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands met with Principal Secretary Vivianne Fock Tave ahead of the presentation of his Credentials



Ambassador-designate of Japan, H.E. Mr. Sakuta Makoto paid a courtesy call on Minister Sylvestre Radegonde ahead of the presentation of his Credentials

Farewell Call



Ambassador-designate of the Republic of Madagascar to the Republic of Seychelles, H.E Albert Camille Vital met with Acting Principal Secretary, Ambassador Selby Pillay ahead of the presentation of his Credentials



The High Commissioner of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, H.E. Mr. Srimal Wickremasinghe, paid a farewell call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, Mr. Sylvestre Radegonde

Courtesy calls by Representatives of Foreign States



The Regional Affairs Division hosted a delegation from the College of Higher Defence Management (CHDM), Hyderabad, India, as part of their foreign study tour.



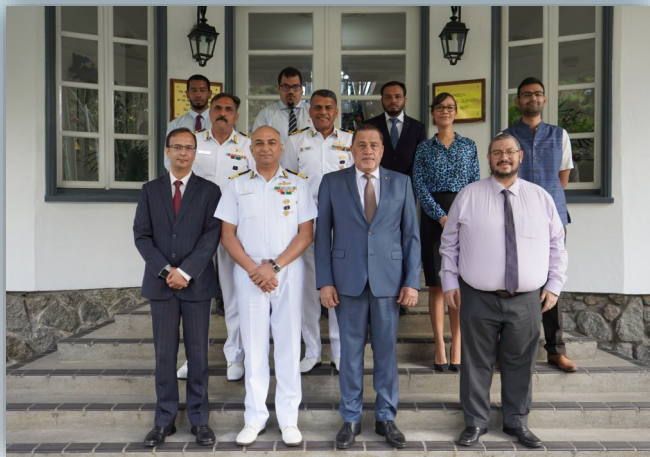
The Vice-Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee of the People's Republic of China, H.E. Mr. MU Hong led a 14 member-delegation to Seychelles



The Deputy Mayor of the Chengdu Municipal People's Government, Mr. Wang Qian and his delegation paid a courtesy call on Minister Sylvestre Radegonde



The Head of the Country Cluster delegation for the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Ms. María Martínez, paid a courtesy call on Minister Sylvestre Radegonde



Mr. Sylvestre Radegonde, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tourism, met with Commodore Vishal Sharma from India



Ambassador Latifa Akharbach, Moroccan candidate for the position of Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission paid a courtesy call on Minister Sylvestre Radegonde



Ambassador Selma Haddadi , Algerian candidate for the position of Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission paid a courtesy call on Minister Sylvestre Radegonde



H.E Mr. Richard J. Randriamandrato , Malagasy candidate for the position of Chairperson of the African Union Commission met with Acting Principal Secretary, Ambassador Selby Pillay



Captain Humayun Yaqoob Awan, Commanding Officer of the Pakistan Naval Ship "PNS MOAWIN A-39," paid a visit to Acting Principal Secretary, Ambassador Selby Pillay

Congratulations!



The Foreign Affairs Department wishes to congratulate Mr. Maurizio Mengassini on his appointment as the new Honorary Consul for the Republic of Seychelles in Milan, Italy.

Events attended by FAD Overseas

Seychelles represented at the 23rd COMESA Summit of Heads of State and Government



The 23rd COMESA Summit of Heads of State and Government and the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs took place in Bujumbura, Burundi, from 28th-31st October 2024. It coincided with the commemoration of the organisation's 30th anniversary, being celebrated this year. President Ramkalawan was represented by Ambassador Claude Morel as Special Envoy at the Summit. He was accompanied by Mrs. Nisha Chengo, Second Secretary.

The theme of the Summit, "Accelerating Regional Integration through the Development of Regional Value Chains in Climate-Resilient Agriculture, Mining, and Tourism," guided member states' discussions on key

COMESA programmes, alongside regional peace and security concerns. The Summit witnessed the swearing-in of the COMESA Committee of Elders. Ambassador Marie-Pierre Lloyd, who was re-elected last year to serve a second term on the committee was also present.

In his interventions during the Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Morel emphasised security challenges facing island states, especially regarding climate resilience and maritime security. He highlighted Seychelles' upcoming Chairmanship of the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities, reaffirming its commitment to addressing piracy and related security threats impacting regional stability.

Seychelles participates in the Ordinary SADC Summit of Heads of State and Government

The Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) was held on 20th November 2024, in Harare, Republic of Zimbabwe.

Mr Errol Fonseka, Minister of Internal Affairs, represented President Wavel Ramkalawan at the Summit. The Summit provided a significant platform for Member States to discuss key regional issues, with a focus on peace and security, particularly the ongoing crisis in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Member States expressed deep concern over the continuing deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in the DRC. The Summit also reaffirmed SADC's commitment to resolving the conflict and achieving lasting peace, stability, and security in the country.

Member States also commended the Republics of Mozambique, Botswana and Mauritius for successfully holding peaceful elections and congratulated the newly elected leaders.

At the Summit, the Seychelles delegation called for enhanced, coordinated efforts towards a peaceful and sustainable resolution of the conflict in eastern DRC. The country emphasised the importance of a collaborative approach involving all relevant stakeholders, working within the joint framework for the coordination and harmonisation of peace initiatives and processes in the region.

The Foreign Affairs Department was represented by Director General for Regional Affairs, Mr. Christian Faure and Third Secretary Regional Affairs / SADC Desk Officer, Ms. Trisha Hoareau.



Minister Sylvestre Radegonde leads Seychelles' delegation at the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting for Small States (CMMSS)

Minister Sylvestre Radegonde led the Seychelles' delegation at the Commonwealth Ministerial Meeting for Small States (CMMSS), which took place alongside the 27th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2024 in Apia, Samoa. Co-chaired by Hon. Fiamē Naomi Mata'afa, Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Samoa and Hon. Dr Tambo Gina, Minister of Economic Planning and Development of the Kingdom of Eswatini, the meeting focused on key challenges for Commonwealth Small States, including climate change, economic vulnerability, and access to finance.

Minister Radegonde, speaking on behalf of Mr. Flavien Joubert, Minister for Agriculture, Climate Change and Environment, the Seychelles' nominated Advocacy Champion for Climate Change, emphasised the urgent need for accountability from high-emitting nations. He called on them to honour their climate finance commitments to support Small Island Developing States (SIDS). He acknowledged the ongoing efforts to

operationalise the Loss and Damage Fund but noted, "...more needs to be done to ensure that its access is simplified and tailored to the realities of SIDS." Advocacy Champions, nominated by member countries, drives efforts to champion the UN-Commonwealth Advocacy Strategy on Small States, which supports the United Nations Secretary-General's (UNSG) Decade of Action Agenda. Minister Radegonde also called for easier access to funding and commended the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, suggesting sustainable funding to ensure its ongoing support for SIDS.

During the CMMSS, the Commonwealth Secretariat introduced initiatives to enhance the capacity of small states, including the Commonwealth Sovereign Sustainable Debt Network, the Commonwealth Debt Swaps Guidance Note, and the Commonwealth Virtual Centre for Small States (VCSS). The meeting concluded with the adoption of a Programme of Action for Small States, aimed at strengthening existing mechanisms and aligning with global frameworks like the Antigua and Barbuda Agenda for SIDS (ABAS).

Minister Radegonde was joined by Ms. Patsy Moustache, Acting High Commissioner of Seychelles in London, and Mr. Hervé Pool, Commonwealth Desk Officer at the Foreign Affairs Department.



Minister Sylvestre Radegonde accompanied by Ms Patsy Moustache and Mr Herve Pool

Minister Radegonde attends Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers' Meeting

Still in Apia, Samoa, Minister Sylvestre Radegonde, continued his engagement in the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) by participating in the Pre-CHOGM CFAMM. CFAMM is an integral part of the broader CHOGM framework.

Focusing on the 2024 CHOGM theme, "One Resilient Common Future: Transforming our Common Wealth" the discussions among Commonwealth Foreign Ministers revolved around four thematic tracks:

1. Building Resilient Societies
2. Strengthening Democratic Institutions
3. Protecting the Environment
4. Promoting Resilient Economies

Presentations from Commonwealth-affiliated organisations, including the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) highlighted their ongoing initiatives. The meeting also reviewed the outcomes of key Pre-CHOGM forums addressing Business, People, Women, and Youth.

The session concluded with the adoption of key documents that will not only guide the Commonwealth's agenda over the next two years but also encourage member nations to reflect on their shared responsibilities as they prepare for CHOGM 2026.



Minister Sylvestre Radegonde attending the meeting

Minister Radegonde meets with former President Faure on the margins of the CFAMM



*Minister Sylvestre Radegonde and
Former President Danny Faure
exchange on the sidelines of the CFAMM*

Minister Radegonde also met with former President Faure on the margins of the Commonwealth Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (CFAMM) in Apia, Samoa.

Former President Faure is currently serving as Chair of the Board of Governors of the Commonwealth of Learning (COL), an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting distance education and open learning across the Commonwealth.

The Commission of Learning presented its initiatives and recent engagements to the CFAMM.

Seychelles and the Commonwealth of the Bahamas establish diplomatic relations

Still on the sidelines of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Apia, Samoa, Seychelles and The Bahamas formalised their diplomatic relations through the signing of a Joint Communiqué.

The agreement was signed by Minister Sylvestre Radegonde and The Honourable Frederick A. Mitchell, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Seychelles and The Bahamas share several common priorities, particularly in addressing climate change, advocating for the unique challenges of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), and strengthening their participation in international organisations such as the Commonwealth and the United Nations.



*Minister Sylvestre Radegonde and his Bahamian
counterpart formalised the diplomatic relations
between the two countries prior to CHOGM*

Did you know?



The Commonwealth

The Seychelles became the 38th country to join the Commonwealth on June 28th 1976, one day before it became an independent country.

The Commonwealth is a voluntary association of 56 independent and equal countries.

It is home to 2.7 billion people, and includes both advanced economies and developing countries.

33 of its members are small states, including many island nations (like the Seychelles). The Commonwealth's roots go back to the British Empire.

Leaders of Commonwealth countries meet every two years for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), hosted by different member countries on a rotating basis. CHOGM 2024 was held in Apia, Samoa.

Minister Radegonde attends the 1st Ministerial Conference of the Russia – Africa Partnership Forum

Minister Sylvestre Radegonde, led a delegation in the inaugural Ministerial Conference of the Russia–Africa Partnership Forum. This high-level meeting, convened from 9 to 11 November, was aimed at laying the groundwork for the third Russia–Africa Summit, set to take place in 2026. It underscored the mutual commitment of African states and the Russian Federation to strengthening cooperation across multiple strategic areas.

Minister Radegonde engaged in key plenary sessions focused on advancing the 2023–2026 Russia–Africa Partnership action plan, originally established during the second Russia–Africa Summit held in St. Petersburg in 2023. These sessions provided a platform to review the progress of initiatives in areas of shared importance, particularly in economic cooperation, trade, security, and sustainable development across the African continent.

Participants jointly endorsed a Joint Statement, reinforcing commitments to address Africa’s pressing challenges, notably in combating terrorism, fortifying food and energy security, and tackling climate change. The Joint Statement further outlined collaborative stances on critical global issues, emphasising the necessity for careful measures towards governance in outer space, strengthened cybersecurity frameworks, and comprehensive reforms to the international financial architecture.

In his intervention, Minister Radegonde underscored specific priorities for African Small Island Developing States (SIDS), notably highlighting the urgent need for intensified climate action, improved access to concessional finance, and robust security measures to counter maritime terrorism. Minister Radegonde also reiterated the African Union’s collective stance on fostering peaceful conflict resolution through diplomacy and dialogue, reaffirming Africa’s commitment to global peace and stability.

Minister Radegonde was accompanied at the First Ministerial Conference of the Russia – Africa Partnership Forum by Mr. James Carpin, Third Secretary (Desk officer for Russia) and Mr. Danio Vidot, Protocol Officer from the Foreign Affairs Department.



Group photo of attendees of the 1st Ministerial Conference of the Russia-Africa Partnership Forum

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism bids farewell to Honorary Consul, Mr. Francis Herbet



The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Tourism lost one of its longest serving Honorary Consuls, Mr. Francis Herbet, the Seychelles Honorary Consul in Rouen, France.

Since his appointment in April 2012, Mr. Herbet demonstrated exceptional dedication and steadfast commitment to serving Seychelles. He has been pivotal in the twinning initiative between La Digue and Petit Caux, as well as the collaboration between l'école de Fidelaire and Baie Ste Anne Praslin Primary School. Mr. Herbet has also been instrumental in coordinating training camps aimed at preparing Seychellois athletes for the Indian Ocean Games over the years.

Mr. Herbet participated for a last time in the biennial Seychelles Honorary Consuls Conference, held from 9th to 11th October 2024 in Seychelles.

Five minutes with a Diplomat

We had a chat with Second Secretary Herve Pool in this last quarter, to learn more about his journey with FAD.

Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

I was raised in a humble and hard-working family of six. After completing my A-levels, I joined the Ministry and later pursued my bachelor's degree in China, where I spent five years (and yes, I can order food without pointing at the menu!). Following this, I completed my master's degree at the University of Malta. I am happily married with two beautiful children.

I currently serve as a Second Secretary in the Multilateral Affairs Division, where I help manage Seychelles' relations with international organisations, provide research and briefings, and strengthen our participation in multilateral fora. My focus spans areas like sustainable development, human rights, decent work, and climate action, ensuring our positions are heard and understood.

Coming from a small island nation, we have always had to punch above our weight, and I see my work as part of that effort to make a meaningful difference in the lives of those we serve: the public.



How long have you been with the FAD and what sparked your interest in diplomacy?

I have been here for over a decade, plus a few extra months, long enough to see the 'Maison' transform and adapt, not just in structure but in how it faces new and dynamic global challenges. It has been a rewarding journey, filled with growth, learning, and constant change along the way.

Since childhood, I have been fascinated by our ever-changing world. My father insisted that my siblings and I watch the 8 pm news daily to stay informed, which sparked my interest in the causes and effects of human interactions.

Over the years, the news - and the issues it covers has evolved, and I now view it with a broader perspective. This shift helped me see that international relations are much more than headlines. The decisions made on the global stage ripple into our daily lives, with diplomacy serving as the thread that ties it all together. That early exposure sparked my interest in diplomacy, an interest that has grown over time.

What is your favourite part of your job at FAD?

A 'Seychellois diplomat' is, if you will indulge the metaphor, both a platform and a password, unlocking opportunities, building relationships, and on occasion, donning the cloak of a guardian for our small nation's interests on the international stage. Being there to experience it first-hand is in itself a truly rewarding experience.

You originally started in the Protocol and Public Diplomacy Division, tell us a bit about your journey through the Department.

That is correct. I began my career as a Protocol Officer. I have come to believe, is the ideal launchpad for any aspiring diplomat. It taught me the importance of decorum, procedures, etiquette, and cross-cultural respect, skills that helped me, and continues to this day, to build strong relationships with both dignitaries and stakeholders.

Building on these early experiences, I developed a yearning to do more and



decided to pursue further studies through the Ministry. Upon my return, I joined the Bilateral Affairs Division as a Third Secretary, covering the African desk. After a restructuring, I moved to the Organisations and Candidatures section, and later to the Multilateral Affairs Division, where I was promoted to Second Secretary. I am currently based in this division.

All in all, it has been an exciting and rewarding journey, and I am eager to see what lies ahead as my career continues to unfold.

As a youth yourself, what advice would you give to young people who wish to join the diplomatic service?

Diplomacy gives us the chance to be part of something bigger than ourselves. Even from a small country, we can influence global discussions and fight for issues that impact our nation's future. It is often said, "The best way to predict the future is to create it." Diplomacy allows us to shape that future, not just for our islands, but for the world. Your voice and actions matter in shaping the global landscape we all share.



Training Sessions and FAD's Social Engagements

Protocol and Etiquette Training

In the month of November 2024, students from the National Institute for Health and Social Studies (NIHSS) and the secondary schools of Anse Boileau and Beau Vallon participated in an informative session with staff from various Divisions of the Foreign Affairs Department. This engagement enabled them to learn about the Department's workings, as well as important aspects of protocol, etiquette, and the proper representation of Seychelles' National Symbols.



The Protocol and Public Diplomacy Division welcomes interns



During the week of 16th—20th December 2024, the Protocol and Public Diplomacy Division welcomed two students from the Anse Boileau Secondary School.

Mariah and Eva spent a week learning about the various duties undertaken in the division, namely: protocol assistance, airport duty, covering bilateral meetings as well as overseeing an accreditation at State House.

They were also quizzed on terms used in this field of work on a daily basis as well as how press releases are drafted and how the FAD website is updated.

Mariah and Eva pose with their Certificate of Completion

Africa Youth Day Celebration 2024

In celebration of Africa Youth Day, the Foreign Affairs Department collaborated with the Seychelles National Youth Council to host an awareness raising event at English River Secondary School on October 29th 2024. The African Union's theme for 2024, "Educate and Skill Africa for the 21st Century," highlighted the vital need to equip our youth with essential skills for the future.

We were honoured to welcome UN Youth and Diversity in Intelligence Association who shared valuable insights on youth engagement to inspire our students.



Staff from the Regional Affairs Division pose for a souvenir photo with the students from the English River Secondary School

Social Committee activities - The Creole Festival

On 31st October 2024, the celebrations for the Creole Festival at the Foreign Affairs Department began with a beautiful serenade procession celebrating a newlywed couple. This was followed by a Creole buffet, where an assortment of dishes was prepared by staff from the Department's various Divisions. In the afternoon, attendees were treated to light entertainment, which included singing, dancing, and domino competitions.

