

Diplomatic Cocktail 2026

Speech by Mr. Barry Faure

Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Diaspora

“50 Years of Vision and Voice: Seychelles’ Journey with the Global Community Toward Shared Security and Sustainable Development.”

I. Opening and Welcome

Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good evening. It is a profound pleasure to welcome you tonight as we gather in the spirit of friendship and mutual respect that defines our diplomatic community.

This evening is, above all, a gesture of our sincere appreciation. Through your presence and your tireless engagement, you have become more than just representatives of your nations; you are valued contributors to the Seychellois national journey.

I would like to extend a particularly warm welcome to the newest members of our Resident Diplomatic Corps:

* Her Excellency Mrs. Anne Tallineau, Ambassador of France

* His Excellency Mr. Rohit Rathish, High Commissioner of India.

* Her Excellency Mrs. Iraida de la Caridad Guerrero Zúñiga, Ambassador of Cuba.

Bienvenue, Namaskar and Bienvenida. We look forward to a productive and close cooperation during your tenures.

I also wish to recognize those who have transitioned. We thank the Ambassadors who recently completed their mandates and wish them every success in their next chapters. To our new Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, His Excellency Mr. Artem Kozhin, Ambassador of the Russian Federation: congratulations on your appointment. We look forward to your leadership.

My deepest gratitude also goes to the former Dean, Her Excellency Ambassador Alexandra Azaïs, for her years of dedicated service and her unique ability to weave diplomacy with the celebration of our vibrant Seychellois culture.

Finally, I must acknowledge the foundation laid by my predecessor, Ambassador Sylvestre Radegonde. We thank him for his leadership and wish him fulfilment in all his future endeavours.

II. A Vision for Domestic Renewal and Global Agency

Last October, the people of Seychelles entrusted a new administration with the responsibility of leadership. Under President Patrick Herminie, we have set a clear, unifying course. Our focus is inward—on the rule of law, economic resilience, and inclusive development—but our gaze remains outward.

For a small, open island economy, domestic progress and international engagement are two sides of the same coin. Diplomacy is our tool for managing risk and creating opportunity. This is why the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Diaspora now explicitly includes our citizens abroad. They are our partners in investment, culture, and people-to-people diplomacy, and strengthening this bond is a key priority for our global presence.

III. 50 Years of Vision and Voice

The theme of this evening—"50 Years of Vision and Voice: Seychelles' Journey with the Global Community Toward Shared Security and Sustainable Development"—reflects a remarkable evolution.

Over five decades, Seychelles has moved from a newly independent state building its basic institutions to a confident, respected actor on the world stage. We have moved from simple participation to active contribution, and now, to shared responsibility.

Today, our foreign policy is defined by agency. We don't just speak of our vulnerabilities; we propose solutions. This is evident in our leadership on:

- The Blue Economy: Pioneering debt-for-nature swaps and the world's first sovereign blue bond.
- Environmental Stewardship: Protecting 30% of our Exclusive Economic Zone well ahead of global targets and being the first African nation to ratify the BBNJ Agreement.
- Multilateral Leadership: Our recent elections to the UN Tourism Executive Council and the Universal Postal Union councils reflect global confidence in our constructive voice.
- Maritime Security: We currently chair the Contact Group on Illicit Maritime Activities and have chaired the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia.

IV. Navigating a Volatile World

We celebrate these milestones at a time of immense global complexity. Prolonged conflicts and strategic rivalries are straining the international system. For Seychelles, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity is not an abstract concept; it is the practical foundation of trust and stability for smaller states.

This is most evident in our waters. The resurgence of piracy since 2023 and instability in the Red Sea threaten the very lifelines of global trade. Maritime security requires a collective response, and Seychelles remains a committed partner in safeguarding these vital corridors.

As we navigate this increasingly complex world, our compass shall remain set on the principle of non-alignment. This should not be equated as a withdrawal from international responsibility, but rather a conscious choice to exercise independent judgement, balanced engagement and constructive dialogue.

V. Regional Solidarity

Dans ce même esprit, les Seychelles placent la coopération régionale et le multilatéralisme au cœur de leur action. Notre engagement au sein de la Commission de l'océan Indien et de la Francophonie est essentiel pour renforcer notre résilience collective.

La présidence seychelloise de la COI a marqué une étape clé, renforçant la visibilité de notre région et faisant progresser des priorités concrètes pour nos populations. Rien de tout cela ne serait possible sans le dévouement des diplomates et experts qui transforment les discours en actions mesurables.

VI. Appreciation and Closing

Avan mon terminen, mon swete eksprim mon apresyasyon anver bann travayer dan Minister Zafer Etranzer ek Dyaspora. Zot profesyonnalizm ek zot dedikasyon an silans i sa pilye ki soutenir nou travay toulezour.

Excellencies, friends, as Seychelles looks toward its next fifty years, we do so with clarity and purpose. We will remain a principled, reliable partner—one that listens, contributes, and works to ensure that sustainable development leaves no country behind.

Please, join me in a toast:

To friendship, to cooperation, and to the continued strength of our partnerships.

Thank you.

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