



Indian Diaspora Council

## Indian Diaspora Council International

Shared heritage, aspirations and interests

[www.indiandiasporacouncil.org](http://www.indiandiasporacouncil.org)

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### NEWS

April 30, 2018 (EST-USA)

#### IDC in SOLIDARITY with MUSLIM WOMEN'S COUNCIL of MAURITIUS

**Ms. Kritilata Ram**, the Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC) coordinator in Mauritius, joined the Muslim Ladies Council in a Press Conference on April 24, 2018 in Port Louis to protest against the injustice being caused by the management of a hotel in Mauritius, interdicting the Hindu women to wear their *tika* at their place of work. The President of the Muslim Ladies Council also talked about the wearing of *hijaab* at the place of work.

Ms. Ram stated that, "This should not be a dispute, or controversy, as we have been living in this country (Mauritius) for years and years and where each community that is our ancestors who came from Madagascar, India, Africa, France and China have been practising their ancestral religions, cultures and languages as well as their custom, traditions, rites and rituals and wearing their dresses with accessories in a very peaceful manner with no interference from any other community".

"This harmony has been prevailing years and years back where we can find several religions, cultures, and languages co-existing and that the general population, the Hindus, the Muslims and the Chinese living side by side though better understanding, tolerance and cooperation. I also want to state that living and co-existing in peace and harmony among all groups in Mauritius has brought our Independent of 50 years old Mauritius on the forefront as a model to the world where harmonious co-existence prevail".

Ms. Ram explained the importance of Hindu women wearing the *Tika*, or *Tilak*, *Sindoor*, and *Thali*, *Mangalsutra*. These are not accessories only of beauty, but they represent the symbol of her being a married woman. They wear the *tika* or *tilak* in the centre of the forehead because the entire body is said to be controlled from this point and gave example just as God Shiva has his third eye in the centre of his forehead. As for the (vermillion) *sindoor* in the wife's hair parting signifies the prayers of the wife for the long life of her husband. Hindu religious texts have equated a husband with God and women take pride in being married and the *Mangalsutra*, the black beads wore around the neck also symbolises a woman being married and the love between the couple and the woman will remove them only after the death of her husband.

Ms. Ram appealed to the institution to review its decision and to go according to our constitution which guaranteed liberty of expression of religion. Article 4 of the Employment Rights Acts also protects its employees against all form of discrimination at work. The authorities in Mauritius also has called them to task but the Management of the Hotel is maintaining its position.

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*Indian Diaspora Council International (IDC), established in 1997, is an international non-profit organization with global affiliates and membership in 21 countries with the objective to embrace, engage, and enhance the shared heritage, aspirations, and interests of persons of Indian origin with optimum inclusivity.*



*Ms. Kritilata Ram seated 3<sup>rd</sup> from right, front row*



*Ms. Kritilata Ram (2<sup>nd</sup> from left) speaking at the Press Conference*