

Name

Address (in full)

Date

Prime Minister, Hon. Navin Ramgoolam,
Treasury Building, Port Louis.

Dear Sir,

Today, I went to the MNIC Conversion Centre at (*place*), in person. I presented my old ID Card, my birth certificate and proof of address (and where necessary other documents, too). I am, by this letter, putting on record in person and in writing that I am applying for my new ID Card.

However,

1. I have formal objection to being fingerprinted by the State. I hereby withhold my consent. My reasons are:
 - It is firstly a matter of privacy; my fingerprints are part of my body, and are private.
 - There is a danger that, under the *Data Protection Act*, the Data Commissioner may hand over all her powers over data, which are vast, to the Police.
 - I am against the fact that the sovereign state of Mauritius supply my data, including fingerprints, to imperialist countries.
 - I am aware that there are public and private sector employees who have access to my data; I am also aware that the data will be kept at the Government On-Line Centre; meanwhile, it has become public knowledge that both the www.gov.mu and the MNIC site have neglected to protect citizens' private data (names, addresses, telephone numbers, etc); so I am justified in doubting the efficacy of data security, in relation to commercial interests and/or criminal/espionage interests that may want to get at the data.
 - The storage of all this biometric data is an onerous ongoing burden on public finance.

When I refused to give my fingerprints, the officers present refused to register me for a new ID Card.

I object not only to my own private data being kept in a centralized data-base, but also to other co-citizens' data being thus stored. So I also call for the State to destroy the centralized data-base, including fingerprints that people have so far submitted; these have been submitted *under duress* i.e. threat of imprisonment for 5 years.

2. I also object to the legal framework making the new card compulsory, and making it possible for any police officer to ask me to present my card. This will convert the Mauritian State into a weighty bureaucracy, and may, in the long run, contribute to making it a police state.

For the above two reasons, I am writing this letter to you.

As you are aware, there are many relevant international factors to bear in mind. In Britain, Prime Minister Cameron in 2010 destroyed the centralized data-base started by the previous Government. George Bush's "Smart Cards" were abandoned after almost all the states refused them. The Australian authorities have cancelled their biometric cards. The European Courts have handed down a number of judgments calling for member states to destroy centralized data-bases, including fingerprinting information, and to stop gathering them.

In Mauritius itself, the *Data Protection Commissioner* has declared compulsory fingerprinting for attendance at work to be illegal in the cases against Alteo and Clevis. In addition, there are 3 Constitutional cases in the Supreme Court, one by a former Vice Prime Minister, another supported by a former Justice Minister. These cases have suffered delaying tactics, provoking the intervention of the Chief Justice – but only after some 3/4 of citizens had been cowed into giving fingerprints. Meanwhile, the State has continued wily-nily to gather fingerprints. The DPP has said that it is a fact that he is "unlikely" to prosecute before final judgment in these cases.

We, therefore, call for suspension of the fingerprinting, destruction of the existing fingerprints, and revocation of the clause making the new card compulsory.

Yours sincerely,

Signed