

Update from National Assembly of Seychelles

Mrs. Florette Monaie

Principal Parliamentary Reporter

We had quite a few challenges at the National Assembly of Seychelles with the Covid pandemic and a lot of money was spent to accommodate these challenges. We had a few lockdowns nationally and internally when members got Covid but we always sit live - no virtual.

To meet the Ministry of Health requirements and strict measures were put in place by the National Assembly Secretariat as follows;

- We had to make changes in the chamber sittings to cater to the social distancing.
- Mask is essential at all times.
- Members' snacks were put in individual takeaway boxes and water dispensers were put in the chambers for members to get their own water.
- Committee meetings and visits either internally or to outside stakeholders were canceled for quite a long time.
- Members and staff and officials to the Assembly had to go through a temperature check upon the entrance to the Parliament.
- Members and Ministers were all equipped with sanitizing liquid on their desk in the Chamber at all times.

Ms. Samia Lebon

Senior Parliamentary Reporter and Information Officer

If I could just add up to what my colleague from Seychelle said. As you may know or not Seychelles is a very small Parliament with only 35 Members. And with the COVID we only shut down for 2 weeks were staff worked from home. Reporters staff, 7 of us (Hansard) were assigned with laptops and internet connections.

After the 2 weeks sitting resumed (but still had to cancel at times) with strict health measures (Mask wearing, temperature checks, social distancing etc....) Staff went on a rotation schedule of working from home to limit staff movements. We did not have any online Assembly Session.

Meetings and Committee work: Meetings and visit was put on hold but then resume. Virtual meeting was mostly for International Affairs.

As it was something new, at first there was a bit of hiccups but soon everyone got into it and it worked. But as we speak now everything is back to normal, no more working from homes.

Our main issue came with the economic problem that COVID brought, all future development plans for our Reporters Unit (Hansard) had to be put on hold. But we are slowly working on them.