



GOVERNMENT PROGRAMME 2012-2015

Moving the Nation Forward

ADDRESS

by

The Acting President

of the

Republic of Mauritius

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Moving the Nation Forward

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Introduction

**Mr. Speaker, Sir,
Honourable Members,**

1. I am pleased to welcome you to the formal opening of the Second Session of the Fifth National Assembly.

2. This Second Session marks an important third stage of Government's action since 2005, opening up exciting new opportunities for the years ahead.

3. The first stage covered the period of 2005 until the global financial crisis of 2008. During this period Government embarked on radical reforms to the economy bringing benefits to all of society. The result was the highest average economic growth the country has witnessed since 2000.

4. The second stage covered the years since the financial crisis until today. During this period the focus had to be on stability in the face of the worst global recession for 80 years. Our growth rate has been impacted, yet it is worth noting that our average growth since the financial crisis still exceeds that achieved between 2001-2005 when the world was not facing any economic crisis.

5. Government takes great pride in the fact that Mauritius has never before witnessed a period of such stable growth as has been achieved over the last seven years. As noted by international observers, this stability has been achieved by the positive way our economy responded to Government's supportive policy packages.

6. Since 2005, when the country was declared to be "*en état d'urgence économique*", on the brink of a precipice, our country has witnessed:

- economic growth increase;
- investment rise, including an unprecedented increase in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI);
- the unemployment rate decline;
- the level of Government debt decline relative to the size of the economy; and
- average income per head in Purchasing Power Parity terms rise by 50%, the best performance since 2000.

All these have occurred despite the worst global environment for 80 years.

7. Our country has made considerable progress since the time, just seven years ago, when unemployment amongst our youth stood at a dispiriting 26% and when public sector debt stood at 64% of GDP- well beyond what is considered the danger zone. Government has put an end to the practice of stacking liabilities through off-budget transactions to the tune of Rs 6 billion. It has reduced the suffocating effect of large and unsustainable budget deficits- 8.1% in 2005 - and it has better controlled and managed the structure of debt.

8. Government has produced robust domestic economic fundamentals during a period of global crisis. It has done so by bringing public finances under control, opening up the economy to global competition, boosting SME's to ensure that the benefits of growth are broadly based, and by improving the "Doing Business" environment. These measures introduced by Government have produced the strong and resilient growth of the last seven years, while at the same time, advancing social justice and economic democratisation.

9. However, there is no room in the current global situation for any complacency. We are here today to focus on how Government will lead the nation forward onto a new third stage in very changed conditions. The world economy is a dramatically different place to that of even a few years ago. Our historically most important market, Europe, is set for grim years of weak growth as it wrestles with fiscal austerity and the problems of the Euro zone. The centre of economic gravity is shifting to new regions – Asia, Latin America and Africa – providing both fierce competition and exciting new markets for our country.

10. There is another vital reason why we have to embark on a new stage. Mauritius has attained significant economic and social achievements. It has successfully reached the level of upper middle income countries according to the World Bank. We now have to turn our eyes to a whole new phase of economic growth and focus on becoming a *high* income nation. Government will co-ordinate our national effort to achieve this greater prosperity, it will raise the skills and capacities of our people, harness the power of technology, modernise and streamline our institutions, accelerate innovation in existing industries and encourage diversification and growth in new and more sophisticated sectors.

11. In doing so, Government will remain rooted to the underlying philosophical values that have always guided its actions: Progressive Politics, that is, “*mettre l’humain au centre du développement*”. We have always considered economic success to be meaningful only if it leads to improvements in the quality of life for all in a sustainable way. Government will maintain its unflinching determination to nurture a more inclusive, plural and cohesive society based on human dignity, equality of treatment, economic efficiency and social justice.

12. The Quality of Life for our people is of paramount importance as we progress to a higher development level. Government is of the view that conventional economic indicators like GDP do not take into account some of the costs and consequences of economic activities on such things as the physical or social environment within which our people live, work and play. Government action will therefore continue to be guided by what is important to the Quality of Life of our citizens.

13. Growth also has to be sustainable in a manner which does not harm the most critical contributor to life in Mauritius – the natural environment with which we are blessed. This is why Government will continue to prioritise the Maurice Ile Durable (MID) project.

14. Sustainable growth can only be achieved in a society where there is substantial democratic space and effective institutions. This is why Government has amongst several measures enacted the Equal Opportunities Bill, legislated so that women have a greater role to play in local government, established a Competition Commission and fostered a stronger Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC). The fight to protect institutions is relentless and Government will stand in the way of anyone who seeks to pervert these institutions.

15. Government believes that the ultimate objective of exercising political power is **Moving The Nation Forward**, whatever the set of challenges it has to face. Government is animated by the belief, the passion and the determination to create and nurture a society where everyone thrives and all have opportunities for prosperity and a better quality of life.

16. To reflect the needs of this third stage of Government action, the 2012-2015 Government Programme focuses on these key areas:

- **Prosperity** for All;
- Enhanced **Connectivity**;
- Empowering **People**;
- Cohesive **Society**;
- Strong **Nation**; and
- **Sustainability**.

17. These priorities are in line with the vision set out in Government's programmes in 2005 and 2010. Last November, Government presented a budget focused on 'Growth for the Greater Good' aiming at making Mauritius a high productivity, high efficiency and high wage economy. Government's 2012 - 2015 programme includes the implementation of these measures and policies announced.

18. Over the next three years of its current mandate, Government will build on the firm platform that has been laid over the last seven years to create a more prosperous and fairer society for all.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 1 : PROSPERITY

Key to quality of life is prosperity for all. However, the world economy is a dramatically different place to even a few years ago. Government will coordinate and prepare our economy and society for the required change and continue to deliver strong, stable and inclusive growth.

Key to quality of life is economic prosperity for all. A prosperous nation is underpinned by expectations of promising and stable growth rates. Government has successfully achieved this combination to date despite the recent dramatic turmoil in the major economies of the world.

Honourable Members,

THE ECONOMY

1. Government remains committed to the principles that have produced the growth improvement of the last seven years. An open and market friendly environment, low taxes that have substantially benefited the middle class whilst removing thousands from the tax net and a reduction in red tape. This combination of transparency, flexibility and security remains the bedrock of our policy and critical to producing the inclusive economic growth that characterises economic democratisation.

2. However, what has become clear since the presentation of the 2010-2015 Government Programme is that the domestic economy faces new challenges. Our dependence on Europe as a key market needs to diminish as we increase our exposure to growth economies. At the same time we need to move up the value chain and encourage growth, investment and jobs in new sectors. We need to prepare our economy and society for change.

3. In 1997 Government published Vision 2020 and the country now needs to update its long term vision to provide an overarching view of development for the decades to come. Government proposes to set up a National Strategic Transformation Commission which will, in consultation with all stakeholders, make recommendations on optimal use of resources, inclusive growth, sustainable development, urban planning, land zoning as well as promotion of new sectors.

PUBLIC FINANCES

4. As the Eurozone problems show, key to economic resilience is prudent public finances. Government will continue to ensure macroeconomic policies are appropriate and that the country's finances remain sound.

5. Government's success in controlling public finances has been highlighted by the recent announcement from a sovereign debt credit rating agency that Mauritius' government debt is on positive watch and our country's rating

may be upgraded. This is due to the resilience of our economy, the extent of FDI into high value added sectors and the government's progress in reducing the debt service burden. This reflects the sound fiscal stewardship of the last seven years as well as Government's on-going commitment to fiscal rectitude as evidenced by Government's adoption of the Debt Management Act.

6. Government has brought down public sector debt, as a ratio of GDP, to 54 percent from 64% in 2005. It will bring this down further to 51 percent by 2015 and below 50 percent thereafter. The debt service burden as a percentage of tax revenue has fallen by 20% between 2005 and 2012.

7. To control debt the budget deficit has been more than halved from an unsustainable 8.1% in 2005 to 3.8% of GDP in 2012. For the first time in many years, Government is achieving a surplus on its current account. As a result, and as promised, every new rupee of debt now goes towards financing investment in the future.

8. This control of public finances has been achieved even whilst taxation has been reduced. Lower taxes have produced greater tax revenue but there may still be many who are not paying the taxes they should. The Mauritius Revenue Authority, which will be provided with additional resources, will use the "tax gap" analysis to ensure that all those who should be paying taxes meet their obligations to society.

9. As well as making tax collection more efficient, Government will continue to examine the level of para-statal efficiency and bring expenditure under control. Government will undertake a major rationalisation of para-statal bodies and State Owned Enterprises with a view to improving cost-effectiveness, quality of services and optimal use of human resources. Following the recent success of rationalisation in the cane industry, Government will initiate a similar exercise for all academic research institutions which will be merged under one institutional umbrella by end 2013.

PROMOTING INVESTMENT

10. Since 2006, Government has attracted more FDI than the previous 40 years put

Chapter 1 : Prosperity

together. Government has ambitious plans for infrastructure investment, but to maintain control of public debt it will aggressively seek FDI inflows to finance these projects. By 2015, 10 percent of the financing of major public infrastructure in the Public Sector Investment Plan (PSIP) will be through FDI flows.

11. In order to stimulate investment, Government will maintain its focus on improving the doing business climate and will continue to provide clear and transparent guidelines for investors. Government's target is to focus FDI promotion efforts to sectors with high wage potential.

EMPLOYMENT

12. Since 2005 government has through its labour market reforms achieved a decline in the unemployment rate. Paradoxically, workers are looking for employment though employers face a scarcity of workers. Government will respond to this structural problem by:

- Finalising and implementing the Decent Work Country Programme;
- Providing further training and employment opportunities for the Youth under the National Youth Employment Programme;
- Promoting green jobs;
- Upgrading Employment Information Centres into "Pole d'Emplois";
- Creating more space in the SMEs sector; and
- Setting up a national employment resource centre with the assistance of the International Labour Office. This centre will offer extensive information on the labour market, job prospects, education and training.

13. A new National Training Strategy will be developed to ensure that reforms in education and training are attuned to changes occurring in the larger economy, and the labour market so as to cater for the skills needs of the country for 2012-2025.

14. Government will introduce a Skills Pledge whereby Employers will commit themselves to invest in continuous training and empowerment of all their employees.

NEW SECTORS AND NEW MARKETS

OCEAN ECONOMY

15. Government's vision is to make of Mauritius, within the next ten years, a nation fully conscious of its immense potential as an Ocean State. This is a key channel through which we can advance economically to greater prosperity.

16. Mauritius has one of the largest Exclusive Economic Zones in the world. In addition, the UN approved, last year, the coordinates submitted jointly by Mauritius and Seychelles for jurisdiction over an area of our continental shelf extending over almost 400,000 square kilometres. Thus Mauritius now has a total area of 2.3 million square kilometres over which it can exercise various economic rights. This is more than one thousand and one hundred times larger than our land mass – an area **bigger than that of the combined land area of France, Germany, Italy, Spain and UK**. This will transform our sense of our own geography and constraints.

17. Mauritius will be making further submissions to the UN with respect to other parts of our continental shelf, including around the Chagos Archipelago which forms part of our territory.

18. Laying the foundations of an Ocean Economy will be an unprecedented quest for the expansion of our spatial boundaries, the development of scientific knowledge and business opportunities. The exercise of our rights over the waters and subsoil of the EEZ and Continental Shelf means that we will, as a nation, have access to potentially vast natural and mineral resources in years to come.

19. The time has come for taking our diversification thrust a grand stride forward. Government will significantly extend the economic space for investors, businesses, workers, and the entire population by setting out a concrete and practical plan for developing the Ocean economic space.

20. The potential in the Ocean Economy is enormous for growing our GDP, creating high productivity jobs and improving the living standards of our people.

21. The economic potential of the Oceans covers the exploitation of living and non-living resources in our waters, on the seabed and in the subsoil. The development of the Ocean Economy will have significant positive impact on other

industries including land and sea transportation, cargo and port services. Government's aim is to make the Ocean Economy one of the most important future contributors to GDP.

22. To take full advantage of these opportunities, Mauritius must have the right regulatory regime and the level of skills required to license and supervise Ocean activities and also to service the operators involved.

23. To this end, Government will invite the nation to embark on a major rethink of the potential beyond our existing land mass and consider opportunities as an Ocean State.

24. The Mauritius Oceanographic Institute, which Government set up in 1999, will be asked to lead the nation on this great journey which will shape the future of generations to come. All fundamental and applied research on the ocean industry will be carried out under the aegis of the Mauritius Oceanographic Institute

SMEs

25. Government has made considerable efforts in promoting the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises sector. They are a key channel through which new practices, new jobs and innovation occur and an important channel for economic democratisation. Government will continue to prioritise its support for the development of the SME sector by adding to the various measures already adopted to boost financing, promotion and employment.

26. The decision of Government to make it easier for SMEs to access finance is already yielding positive response. In the three months since the start of the scheme, 248 applications have been received from SMEs and Rs 192m of credit facilities already approved.

27. An Action Plan will be formulated for the robust monitoring and evaluation of all SME programmes and Business Development Schemes.

28. The legal framework will be reviewed to modernise the cooperative sector and enable cooperatives to adapt to the new economy. The Cooperative model will be further promoted amongst youths and women as an alternative way of doing business and as value-based economic units, safeguarding the interest of their members.

29. The Fair Trade certification facilities will be extended to cooperatives.

TOURISM

30. The main thrust of Government policy to grow the tourism sector will be on more visitors from more countries, more spending per tourist, and more tourism products. It will achieve this by acting on three main fronts: attractiveness, visibility and accessibility.

31. Government will ensure reinforced security and safety measures by hotels, formulate an official rating system for hotels, restructure the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority and adopt an eco-labelling standard for tourism.

32. Government will provide a new boost to our pristine outer island territories by looking for selective and targeted investment opportunities for new high-end eco-tourism.

FINANCIAL SERVICES

33. Our country has made considerable progress in positioning our International Financial Centre (IFC) as a jurisdiction of sound repute which has adopted international norms and best practices.

34. Diversification is key to expansion of the global business sector. We need both geographical and product diversification. Government will assist the industry in doing so. We have to build on the considerable expertise acquired and the significant upgrading of our legal and regulatory framework to move up the value chain. In addition to being a jurisdiction of substance, Government will encourage the industry to ensure that we are also seen as a value addition IFC.

35. In so far as the domestic financial services landscape is concerned, Government will encourage service providers to offer innovative financial products and to improve access to financial services for all sections of the population.

36. Government will encourage the financial sector to provide fully integrated services and more actively tap opportunities in Africa.

37. Government has enacted new legislation to facilitate the establishment of an arbitration centre in Mauritius and will actively promote the use of our jurisdiction for international arbitration.

Chapter 1 : Prosperity

THE MANUFACTURING SECTOR

38. Our export oriented enterprises are facing sharp challenges. They need support and Government will continue to respond positively.

39. Emphasis will be on rebalancing exports through market intelligence, focused export promotion campaigns, and improved visibility of Mauritian products to capture new opportunities in existing and emerging markets.

40. Government will:

- promote a Cluster Based Approach in the manufacturing sector;
- introduce an Industrial Productivity Enhancement Programme to promote higher productivity of capital and labour;
- formulate an Industrial Technology Development Plan;
- revamp the Export Promotion Strategy and Plan;
- establish dedicated technology parks for the promotion of specialised activities in the pharmaceutical, medical devices, high-precision engineering and other sectors;

- develop a new industrial investment promotion strategy;
- ensure the effective implementation of anti-dumping and countervailing legislation to safeguard the interests of our domestic industry; and
- celebrate those championing excellence in the manufacturing sector as well as in arts and crafts.

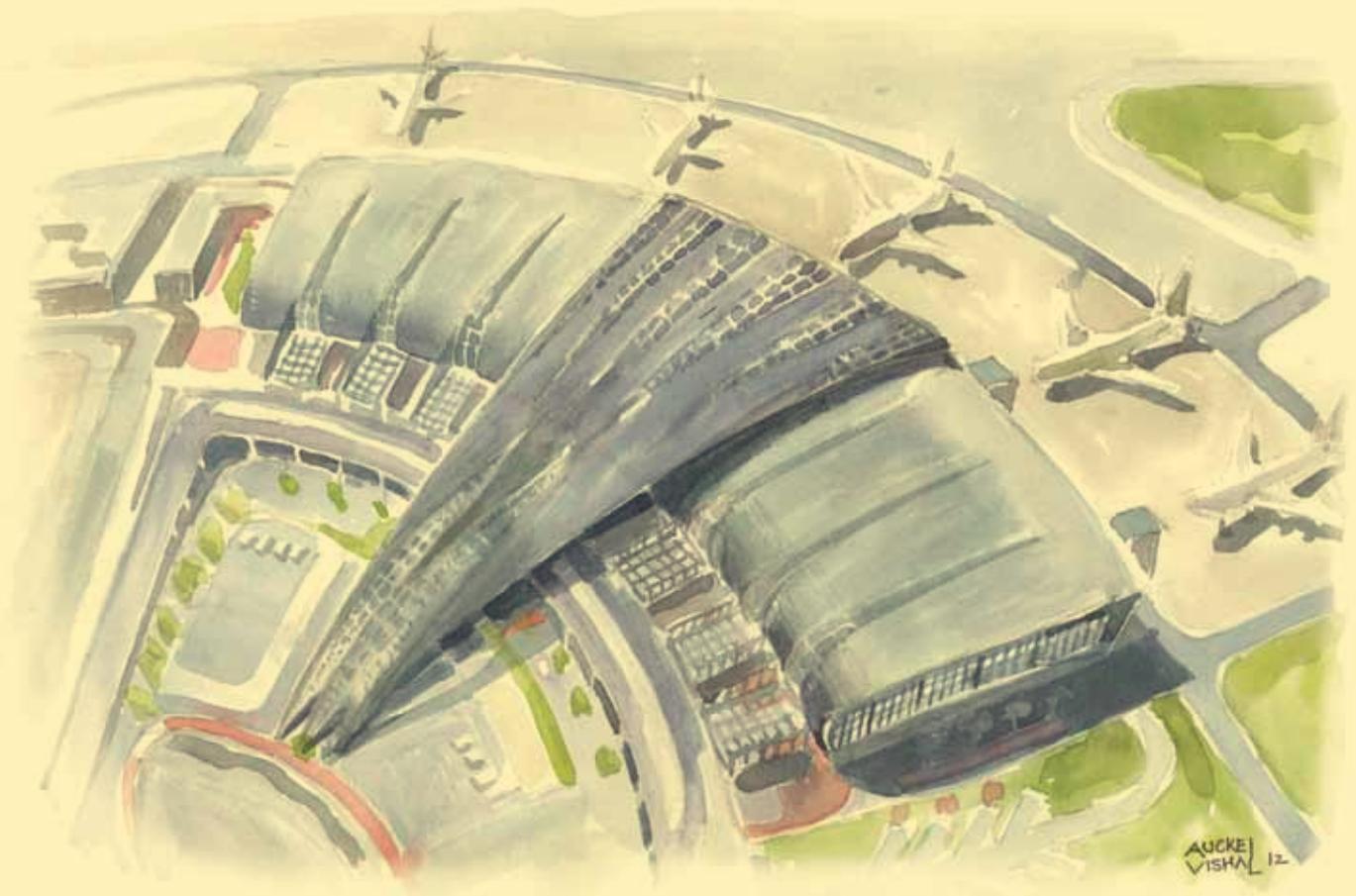
REGIONAL COOPERATION

41. In its endeavour to broaden the economic space Government will also deepen its actions on regional cooperation.

42. Government will promote opportunities for increasing cross-border investment and trade in the region including co-operating with our neighbours in setting up Special Economic Zones.

43. Government will work on improving air connectivity to Africa and facilitating the movement of business people and tourists.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 2 : CONNECTIVITY

As a nation with high ambitions, Mauritius must minimise the distance between itself and the rest of the world and maximise ease of transit across the island. Government will deliver world class transportation and communication systems.

In a modern society connectivity both in virtual and physical terms is critical. In order to propel Mauritius to its next stage of growth, Government will prioritise ICT and infrastructure spending leading to benefits for both leisure and business.

Honourable Members,

AN INTELLIGENT ISLAND

1. Government aims to make our country an intelligent island through achieving full Broadband Connectivity islandwide. Government is creating the right ecosystem to connect each and every household with at least 1 megabyte per second by 2015.

2. With a view to achieving full universal Internet access Government is implementing the WiFi Mauritius Programme for the provision of free Internet access points across Mauritius and Rodrigues.

3. A new submarine fibre optic cable for Mauritius, LION 2 is now operational since last week. This complements the existing SAFE network.

4. Government has furthermore already launched a tender for a study for the connection of Rodrigues to a submarine fibre optic cable.

5. Government believes students with disabilities should be placed on an equal footing in terms of education and access to new technologies. Therefore Government will provide a Braille PC to all visually impaired students over the coming three years.

6. Government will ensure all needy students have access to internet at an affordable price. Needy students sitting for SC and HSC exams will benefit from a discount on their Broadband Internet bill.

7. The internet and social networks are powerful ways for citizens to interact with one another and with government. Innovative technologies including mobile applications will be promoted for this purpose.

ICT/BPO

8. The ICT/BPO sector has enormous potential for investment and higher quality FDI but most importantly for creating higher paid jobs for our youths. Since 2006, Government policies to facilitate investment in this sector have led to

more than 30 percent growth in ICT employment, which is now over 15,000.

9. Government will support the setting up of an ICT Academy to upgrade human capital in that sector, so as to generate more value-added per worker. The Academy will train and supply global talents in various streams of the ICT industry.

DATA PROTECTION

10. In the present age of information and communication, Mauritius has adopted a Data Protection Act which safeguards the processing of personal data. This will also build confidence for local and foreign investors.

11. The Data Protection Act will be amended to incorporate new international data protection principles and attract further investment in the ICT sector through a free and secure flow of personal data between investors and local agents.

PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

12. Government is committed to modernising Mauritius and laying the foundation for a still more prosperous country in years to come. It has already invested a total of Rs 62 billion in infrastructure since 2005.

13. Investing in infrastructure is necessary both for improving the life of our citizens and for long-term growth.

14. An infrastructure project with significant potential for people and business is the creation of a major nationwide Mass Transit System. Work on the first phase of the MTS - the Light Rail Transit - will start by 2013. This project will eventually connect the whole island.

15. The public infrastructure plan of Government will require fast and efficient implementation. To this end, Government will further improve the public procurement system to accelerate decision-making while ensuring accountability.

Chapter 2 : Connectivity

THE ROAD DECONGESTION PROGRAMME

16. In 2007-8 Government embarked on a comprehensive Road Decongestion Programme which is already delivering time and cost savings.

17. Several major projects to ease road traffic are currently being implemented including the Terre Rouge-Verdun-Trianon-Valentina Link Road as well as the widening of existing motorways by 2015.

18. Traditionally, infrastructure development in Mauritius has been managed by Government. However, across the world we are seeing more innovative solutions to infrastructure.

19. Government has this year almost doubled its budgetary allocation to the road sector, planning for an allocation of some Rs 4.3 billion and this is set to rise yet further to Rs 11 billion in 2014.

20. Financing this will require taking advantage of the substantial private sector financing available along with expertise in successful infrastructure projects. For the period 2012-2015 investment in the road sector will be boosted by the introduction of Public Private Partnership (PPP) schemes. The first PPP ventures will cover the construction of the Harbour Bridge, the Port Louis Ring Road (phase 2) and the A1-M1 bridge. These projects will involve private investments to a tune of above Rs20 billion.

PORT & AIRPORT

21. Mauritius, as an island state located in the middle of the Indian Ocean between Africa and Asia, depends heavily on its port and airport to facilitate the movement of people, as well as goods and services which contribute directly to its socio-economic development.

22. Government will continue to invest in the expansion and modernisation of the port and the airport with a view to extending their regional span. In this regard, Government will accelerate the implementation of the Master Plan for modernisation and development of the port.

23. The extension and strengthening of the MCT Quay at Port Louis Harbour will be completed in 2015.

24. Government is in the process of securing a strategic partner for the Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd. Such a partner should be committed to increasing the volume of container traffic and contributing to the investment in port infrastructure and equipment whilst protecting the interests of employees.

25. Air access is crucial for our economy and especially the tourism industry. Air Mauritius has already started to expand its capacity towards growth economies and will finalise its proposals for a strategic partner to help achieve greater global connectivity and efficiency.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 3 : PEOPLE

People who are healthy, well educated and socially, economically and culturally empowered are engaged citizens who produce a successful nation.

The success of a nation is first and foremost about the wellbeing of its people. People who are healthy, well-educated, and socially, economically and culturally empowered, become engaged, responsible citizens. Developing an individual's full potential is both an endorsement of her basic rights as well as enabling her contribution to economy.

Honourable Members,

1. In **Moving the Nation Forward** Government will further invest in the development of our people to ensure:

- Our Children and Youth get a good start in life;
- Our Women are empowered;
- Our Elderly enjoy a pleasant and active retirement;
- Our Vulnerable citizens move up the economic and social ladder;
- Workers are employed in safe and healthy environments; and
- Consumers benefit from competitive markets and fair trading practices.

2. To build a strong and proud Nation where everyone thrives - be it at home, at school, at work or in leisure activities - Government will leave no stone unturned to provide all our citizens - regardless of gender, class or creed - with the support they need to improve their lives and achieve their hopes and goals.

MOVING OUR CHILDREN AND YOUTH FORWARD

3. The crucial foundation years of a child affect the life choices available to her as an adult. Government will place further emphasis on policies pertaining to Early Childhood Development.

4. For each newborn, Government will provide her parents with a Child Health Passport. Regular updates of this document will be encouraged in order to identify early enough any basic health issue and shift to a more preventive health culture within families right from the start.

5. Government will facilitate the setting up of "Crèches de Quartier" across all the districts so that no single child is deprived of the opportunity for self-development during these critical foundation years.

6. Over the next three years, Government will facilitate the setting up of 25 'Crèches de Quartier' each year. Priority will be given to the 43 large NHDC estates where "Syndics" are being set up as well as in designated villages.

7. To further enhance the rights of children, Government will formulate and implement a rights-based and comprehensive National Child Protection Strategy.

8. Government will also introduce a Consolidated Children's Bill to address the issues of safety for children as well as cases of abuse of children.

9. Government will introduce a support scheme to empower private pre-primary schools to improve the quality of care and education. The Ministry of Education's Inspectorate will ensure standardised norms are implemented across all existing kindergartens by mid-2015.

10. To ensure that no single child is denied her opportunity for early self-development, Pre-Primary education will be made compulsory for the age group 3 to 5 as from January 2013.

11. In the Special Education Needs sector, Government will introduce an early identification and assessment programme to profile the needs of differently-abled learners to enable timely intervention.

12. An educational system's first mission is to grow and nurture a collaborative, cultivated, intellectually-agile and responsible citizenry. Government is committed to sustaining efforts to transform the education system by emphasising equitable access, enhanced quality of content, and improved delivery of learning.

13. To ensure all our children benefit from overall development and progress throughout all stages of the primary cycle, Government will review the CPE exams, including the current system of certification and allocation of seats.

14. Government will implement a new dedicated programme for ZEP schools to sustain good practices and replicate support mechanisms for all children with learning difficulties.

Chapter 3 : People

15. To enhance the ability of students to exploit the opportunities of the 21st Century and acquire new global skills, the primary school curriculum will be enhanced by including new topics such as Civic Education, Health Literacy, Information Technology, and Sustainable Living.

16. To promote collaborative learning practices Government will provide, over the next three years, to each Standard IV child attending publicly-funded primary schools a rugged, power efficient children's laptop.

17. Government will also introduce a Student Health and Wellness Program to promote Health Literacy, Basic Nutrition, Lifelong Fitness and sound development of learners across the education system. In this context, the "Child Health Passport" will be updated with regular basic medical check-ups for all children attending public-funded primary schools.

18. To modernise the teaching and learning school environment, Government will introduce a new loan scheme on soft terms for private-aided secondary schools in disadvantaged areas.

19. Government will review the legal and institutional framework for the management and operation of private secondary schools and will revisit the role and function of the Private Secondary Schools Authority (PSSA) so as to enhance support to private secondary schools.

20. Government will introduce a quality assurance and inspections framework with a view to improving quality of teaching and student performance in both State and Private Secondary Schools.

21. The National Form III Assessment will be rolled out in all secondary schools to gauge the level of students after the first three years of secondary schooling and to take remedial measures for further improvement.

22. To inculcate an entrepreneurial culture in our youth, Government will, in consultation with all stakeholders, introduce new Entrepreneurship studies as part of the secondary school curriculum.

23. Government will consider extending the Scholarship Scheme on a regional basis so as to provide more opportunities for students who excel at HSC level.

24. Government will pursue the digitisation of schools and in line with the National

Broadband Policy will expand the installation of wireless connectivity facilities to all educational institutions.

25. To align the educational sector with international best practices, Government will introduce a new Education Act.

26. Government will introduce a Tertiary Education Bill which will provide a framework for the development and regulation of tertiary education in Mauritius. The bill will also provide TEC with enhanced tools to ensure Quality Assurance across the tertiary educational sector.

27. Government will rationalise the libraries of the public-funded tertiary institutions so that each one covers specific specialty areas. Access to academic materials from these institutions will be extended to all students through modern ICT platforms.

28. Government will set up a Multimedia Centre with a view to coordinating all technology related projects in education within the framework of the forthcoming Open University of Mauritius.

29. Government will also set up a comprehensive National Graduate Internship Scheme in order to support the transition of Graduates to the workplace.

30. To further promote lifelong interest and learning in Science and Technology, Government will set up a planetarium at the Rajiv Gandhi Science Centre.

YOUTH AND SPORTS

31. Government is committed to equipping our Youth with the resources they need both to achieve their aspirations and to become active, responsible and engaged citizens.

32. Regional Youth Clubs and Networks provide valuable platforms for peer-learning and self-development. Government will reinstate earlier policies supporting Youth Clubs across the country. Government will organise an annual "Assises de la Jeunesse" – a forum for Youth Clubs to actively engage in debates on national and international issues.

33. To support popular interest in football and to promote active youth engagement in their regions, Government will prepare a national plan for the dissemination of street football and mini-soccer across the islands.

34. The Nation is proud of the achievements of our Medalists in international competition. Government will provide further incentives to support our high level athletes in competitions at this level.

35. To give further impetus to Sports as a discipline for self- and collective- development, Government will prepare an Integrated Strategic Plan for Sports in collaboration with the sports federations and the National Olympic Committee.

36. It should be the legitimate ambition of our country to participate successfully in international football competitions. To that end, Government will provide improved facilities starting at the grassroots. Emphasis will be on world class coaching facilities.

WOMEN

Honourable Members,

37. Gender Equality remains at the forefront of Government's empowerment agenda. Government is proud to have brought landmark legislation for greater participation of women in politics and will continue to overhaul institutional obstacles denying women their rightful place in our democracy.

38. Women's economic empowerment is an integral part of Government's democratisation agenda. Government will therefore further reinforce support to Women Entrepreneurs through innovative SME schemes.

39. Government will present a White Paper on Reproductive Health to facilitate the formulation of modern policies that provide women with better information and services in this area.

40. Domestic violence is one of the worst violations of human rights. Government's policy will be based on zero tolerance with respect to domestic violence. When women's human rights are denied in the place where they should feel safest, they are deprived of their right for self-development. Government will implement a National Action Plan to end gender-based violence and to promote family welfare.

41. Furthermore, Government will pursue consultations with all stakeholders to finalise a Victim Empowerment and Abuser Rehabilitation Policy.

SOCIAL INTEGRATION

42. Government has demonstrated its unrelenting drive to combat poverty in all forms and lift up our less fortunate citizens. Government remains strongly committed to deal with this problem and will continue to eradicate extreme and chronic poverty in the medium term.

43. The support provided under the different programmes of the NEF will be harmonised and made more effective in the context of the Social Register of Mauritius.

44. Effective and sustained poverty alleviation can only succeed by developing proper synergy among Government, Non-Government Organisations and Business. Accordingly, partnerships among the parties involved in poverty alleviation will be further strengthened.

45. Government will focus on housing projects for the benefit of vulnerable groups. In this respect several types of housing units will be offered by the NHDC, the National Empowerment Foundation and Private Property Developers. The size of the existing Housing Units for the poor will be increased taking into consideration the family size and affordability.

46. Government will further encourage the not-for-profit Housing Development Trusts – innovative new vehicles which will mobilise substantial amount of financing for the construction of housing units for the poor.

47. Government will also extend its support to those families falling under the poverty line who are not in receipt of a housing grant but who wish to upgrade their houses. Special consideration will be given to fire victims with a view to providing appropriate accommodation immediately after their dwellings are destroyed.

48. Proper education is critical for moving out of the poverty trap. For primary students who are from less privileged background, Government will, introduce a one-off cash transfer where:

- attendance rate is over 90%; and
- the student has successfully completed yearly examinations.

The one off cash transfer will be increased for those who succeed in their CPE exams.

49. The National Empowerment Foundation will increase the provision of learning corners with internet facilities in deprived areas to enable

Chapter 3 : People

children of those regions to access educational sites to improve their knowledge.

50. Counseling will be provided to children from needy families throughout their school life with a view to boosting their interest in education and overall school performance. Parents of such children will also benefit from such counseling sessions.

51. Government will further pursue the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities by giving a new boost to training and employment of persons with disabilities. Relevant amendments will be brought to the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Act and the National Council for Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Act.

52. Government proposes to introduce a Disability Bill in line with the Convention to provide further protection to persons with disabilities against all forms of discrimination.

53. Government will set up a Respite Care Centre with a view to providing specialised rehabilitative services and leisure facilities to persons with disabilities.

SENIOR CITIZENS

54. Government recognises the valuable contribution Senior Citizens have made to the progress of the country. Government will set up an Observatory on ageing to carry out action-oriented research on the socio-economic aspects of ageing.

55. Government will bring necessary amendments to the National Pensions Act in order to strengthen the management structure of the National Pension Fund and the National Savings Fund while upholding the element of good governance.

56. Government will set up a Legal Counseling Programme on property rights for senior citizens to enhance legal and financial protection to the elderly.

57. A third Recreation Centre at Pointe Aux Piments will be completed by mid-2013.

58. Government will further promote IT literacy programme among the elderly so as to enable them to communicate through new technology. By 2013, Government will complete the setting up of computer clubs in all the 19 Elderly Day Care Centres.

CONSUMERS

59. Given the current volatility in fuel and commodity prices, Government will continue to act as a facilitator and provider of services which are in the interest of consumers and the trading community at large.

60. To pursue its efforts to protect the purchasing power and rights of consumers, Government will introduce legislation to set up a Consumer Ombudsman to address both consumer rights issues as well as consumers' complaints.

61. Government will also consolidate the role of the Price Observatory by extending its scope to include service sectors, such as banking and finance.

62. Government will introduce a new legislation pertaining to hire purchase and credit sale to strike the right balance between promoting business and protecting consumer rights and interests.

63. To further protect consumers, Government will propose legal amendments to improve bank resolution for the benefit of small borrowers. Government will review the whole area of personal loans granted by financial institutions. The objective will be to make it easier for small borrowers to apply for, receive, service their loans and to create effective dispute resolution mechanisms.

64. Government is fully committed to the effective protection of the workforce. In this respect, necessary amendments will be brought to the existing labour legislation to ensure better protection of workers' rights and to provide safer and more conducive working conditions.

65. To enhance skills and employability among the youth, Government will launch a three-year National Youth Employment Programme for those aged between 16 and 25 years to provide them with apprenticeship, training and placement in various sectors of the economy. A stipend will be offered to the unemployed youth and their training costs will be subsidised by Government.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 4 : SOCIETY

Families and communities will benefit from enhancements in law and order and more efficient public services producing clean, safe and pleasant neighbourhoods.

Our strength as a nation is more than just the sum of our citizens as individuals but how we relate to each other for the good of all. Whilst being still young, our society has benefited from a steady and resolute foundation since independence.

Honourable Members,

1. The success of our nation illustrates the power to successfully share common values and a unique common culture blended from our diverse ancestral origins.

2. To move our society forward, Government will ensure that:

- Citizens live in a secure environment where law and order prevail;
- Citizens have access to efficient public services;
- Families and diverse communities remain the foundation of our society; and
- Citizens live in Clean, Safe and Pleasant neighbourhoods.

FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

3. Families and neighbourhoods are the building blocks of our nation. Government is committed to the healthy development, stability and prosperity of all Mauritian families.

HEALTH

4. Government will ensure that everyone has access to increasingly better health services, a clean, safe and pleasant neighbourhood and enhanced leisure and cultural facilities.

5. Government remains committed to continue providing customer-centric universal, accessible and efficient health services.

6. The primary focus of Government's health policy will be on overall wellness rather than strictly curative health care.

7. With regard to preventive policies, our major challenges are now to prevent and control Non-Communicable Diseases and to address the socio-economic impact of demographic transition.

8. Government will continue to invest in health infrastructure projects. This will include:

- Increasing bed capacity substantially;

- Setting up of a specialised hospital for women in collaboration with the University College Hospital, London;

- Setting up of a Paediatric hospital;

- A modern warehouse of international standard will be constructed for essential drugs and medical consumables; and

- A mid-way home will be set up for the rehabilitation of patients currently cared for at the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre.

9. Government is concerned about the increasing incidence of cancer and will present an Action Plan to mitigate cancer risks in the population. It will also:

- Take measures to reduce carcinogenic factors and promote healthy nutrition and lifestyle;

- Continue the implementation of a robust cervical and breast cancer screening programme;

- Provide additional radiotherapy facilities;

- Upgrade all existing cancer care facilities; and

- Consider the setting up of a National Cancer Centre.

10. An aggressive community-based programme will be carried out throughout Mauritius in order to achieve primary prevention of Non Communicable Diseases (NCD). '*Agents de Santé Communautaires*' will visit each household to provide counseling and distribute Health education materials in order to empower the population to live healthily.

11. Government will establish a reinforced NCD Control Programme with emphasis on epidemiological aspects which include disease surveillance and response in line with the requirements of International Health Regulations.

12. Government will continue to build human resource capacity to ensure provision of quality services. The Mauritius Institute of Health and the Diabetes and Vascular Health Centre in collaboration with International Institutions will accentuate their campaign on the prevention and treatment of diabetes and cardio-vascular

Chapter 4 : Society

diseases. Diploma courses in specialised fields such as diabetes and cervical cancer will also be organised.

13. With a view to addressing substance abuse, Government will implement a National Drug Control Master Plan on harmful use of alcohol and drugs.

14. In order to ensure food safety, Government is implementing a National Food Safety Action Plan, by focusing on enhanced food inspection activities, capacity building, review of legislative framework, public awareness campaigns and quality control.

15. Government is committed to containing and reversing HIV prevalence in the population. In collaboration with NGOs, Government will conduct an aggressive campaign to address stigmatisation and discrimination regarding HIV. The population will be encouraged to undertake HIV testing after appropriate counseling.

16. With a view to further reducing HIV infections amongst high risk population, Government will set up Drop-in Centres in each Health Region to offer a wider range of services and will scale up its harm reduction strategies, namely the Methadone Substitution Therapy and Needle Exchange Programme. Government will ensure that antiretroviral drugs are made available to all those who need it.

HOUSING

17. Living under a secure roof is a fundamental right. Government will strengthen social and cultural integration by the provision of appropriate social and recreational facilities through its mixed housing concept.

18. Government will provide further facilities to the middle class families which will include the construction of housing units and the provision of "site and services" plots.

19. To boost the construction sector, the Construction Industry Development Board will establish new standards for the sector. An annual National Schedule of Rates will be also published to ensure that construction costs reflect the fundamental characteristics of local market conditions.

Honourable Members,

LAW AND ORDER

20. The protection of our citizens has been one of the main priorities of Government. Whilst considerable progress has been made in ensuring that our citizens live in a secure environment, there are always new challenges and Government will ensure that citizens are given more protection through better policing and an improved legal system.

21. The policing environment is becoming more challenging. The new vision of the Police Service is "With you, making Mauritius safer". Government will:

- Pursue the implementation of the recommendations contained in the National Policing Strategic Framework;
- Extend the CCTV Surveillance System to cover other areas around the country;
- Continue its programme of recruitment of Trainee Police Constables to reach the target of 5000 recruits by 2015;
- Increase police presence in neighbourhoods across the country to improve the security of all citizens;
- Introduce a Police Complaints Bill for the setting up of a Police Complaints Division within the National Human Rights Commission;
- Introduce a Police and Criminal Evidence Bill providing for Codes of Conduct that will regulate the conduct of police and other investigators and address a number of issues relating to criminal enquiries, including victims' rights;
- Implement the provisions of the Bail Act relating to the introduction of the electronic monitoring mechanism;
- Pursue the upgrading of the Forensic Science Laboratory to enhance the use of DNA analysis;
- Establish a Transnational Organised Crime Unit comprising relevant law enforcement agencies with a view to combating international and other serious crimes;
- Extend the Digital Radio Communication System to cover Rodrigues and Outer Islands;
- Replace the 999 Analogue Emergency Call System with a new digital Emergency

Responses Management System for increased efficiency;

- Establish a Police Academy to enhance the human resource capability of the Police Service;
- Formulate an integrated development project for the National Coast Guard (NCG) including the construction of a new Headquarters and enhanced dock facilities, and the acquisition of a new aircraft, Waterjet Fast Attack craft and Fast Interceptor Boats;
- Commission a state of the art Offshore Patrol Vessel in 2014;
- Provide the police with high tech equipment to combat drug smuggling and other illegal activities at sea;
- Introduce legislation to assist and protect victims and witnesses in order to better safeguard the rights and interests of victims;
- Install a new security system with the latest available technologies at the arrival and departure points at the airport and port;
- Ensure, with international assistance, that law enforcement authorities and the Judiciary are better equipped to allow the prosecution of suspected pirates in our Courts;
- Review the Criminal Code from an international and comparative perspective, while giving careful consideration to local conditions and culture; and
- Invite stakeholders to assist Government in formulating a new approach to tackle drug-related crime. While traffickers will continue to be dealt with severely through the criminal justice system, more effective ways of reducing criminality of appropriate drug-abusing offenders by addressing their drug dependency.

22. The Asset Recovery Act will be amended to cover all accumulated assets of persons convicted of specified offences.

PRISONS SERVICE

23. Government will work on continued improvement of the physical infrastructure in existing prisons. Emphasis will be laid on the acquisition of new technology, equipment and capacity building to ensure that prisons operate at the required level of safety, security and human rights norms. CCTV System will be extended to Petit Verger Prison, Women Prison and Barkly Special Prison.

24. In addition to the construction of the new Melrose Prison Government will develop a Master Plan for the optimal use of existing prison facilities.

25. Government will finalise the construction of an open prison for female detainees considered as minimum risk inmates.

26. Government will step up rehabilitation programmes, literacy and numeracy courses to be provided to detainees with the assistance of NGOs and other voluntary organisations.

27. The Reform Institutions Act will be revised to meet new priorities and challenges.

JUDICIARY

28. A substantial part of the 1997 MacKay Report as updated in 2006, has been implemented. Government will introduce legislation to set up the Court of Appeal Section and High Court Section of the Supreme Court.

29. A full fledged Family Division with the required support services will be created within the High Court Section of the Supreme Court.

30. Government will introduce legislation changing the composition of the Judicial and Legal Service Commission to include participation of civil society, the Solicitor-General, the Director of Public Prosecutions and the legal profession, in addition to Judges.

31. Several existing tribunals, including the Environment Appeal Tribunal where major projects are currently the subject of litigation, will be consolidated to enable them to sit full time so that cases are heard and disposed of expeditiously while ensuring cost effectiveness and rationalisation in the use of resources.

32. Government will review and update the *Code de Procédure Civile* which dates back to 1808.

33. A Special witness scheme will be developed for Courts to provide certain facilities to special categories of witnesses.

34. Government will bring necessary amendments to the Criminal Procedure Act and the Courts Act making the electronic recording of police interviews compulsory.

Chapter 4 : Society

35. The Legal Aid Act will be reviewed in the coming year to broaden the scope for legal assistance.

CIVIL SERVICE

36. The Civil Service plays a key role in the socio-economic transformation of Mauritius. Government will pursue its objective of modernising the Civil Service and will provide it with all the resources required to sustain the delivery of high quality services with efficiency and dedication.

37. Government will introduce legislation to set up a Civil Service College at Moka. It will include a School of Diplomacy and International Relations and it will develop into a regional centre of excellence in Public Sector Management and Governance.

38. To ensure the timely and effective implementation of the Government Programme and of major projects, Government will set up a Project Management and Delivery Unit under the Prime Minister's Office. This unit will monitor and supervise the implementation of all public sector projects within agreed deadlines and in accordance with best international practices.

QUALITY OF LIFE

39. As the nation becomes more prosperous, Mauritians are rightly increasingly interested in their Quality of Life- a far broader concept than income. There is clearly a need for a set of consolidated indicators to describe the quality of life of our citizens and to track our progress as a country.

40. Government will set up a Quality of Life Report Card designed in collaboration with citizens' views about what matters to them for a better quality of life.

41. In order to ensure that families live in safer communities and neighbourhoods, Government will introduce a Safer Communities and Neighbourhood (SCAN) Act with the aim to support and encourage community-based efforts to improve neighbourhood safety and increase neighbourhood livability. This initiative will empower residents to contribute in keeping their neighbourhoods free from activities which negatively affect their health, safety, security or peaceful enjoyment of their property.

42. In order to provide greater access to public services and facilities to our citizens for training, leisure, and sports activities, Government will optimize the use of all public infrastructure including schools and stadiums.

43. Government will continue to support a vibrant NGO community and will formulate a National NGO Policy Paper based on the innovative concept of social entrepreneurship and social marketing. The aim will be to promote a paradigm shift in the NGO sector for sustainability, autonomy and effective service delivery to vulnerable groups.

44. To reinforce road safety and security, Government will introduce more stringent measures. By the end of 2012, legislation for the penalty point system will be introduced and implemented. A Driving, Education and Testing Centre will be operational by 2013. The Police will have access to new technology for the detection of specific traffic violations.

45. A fully trained, equipped and dedicated team will be on regular patrol to curb traffic violations. Vehicle testing services will be decentralised and outsourced to qualified private operators in 2012.

LEISURE

Honourable Members,

46. Government will continue to promote more leisure-related activities both at national and regional levels and ensure that leisure facilities and services remain accessible to all our citizens.

47. Government will improve Community Leisure facilities to encourage more vibrant communities.

48. Government will introduce innovative and creative activities for children during weekends and school holidays so as to enable them to develop and express their talents.

49. Community-based model kitchen gardens and Agricultural Women Clubs will be set up at Social Welfare Centres to increase awareness of gardening, food security and "Green Mauritius".

50. Regional intergenerational drama and music/dance groups will be set up to promote different types of art, music and dance styles and enable participants to organise shows at local and national levels.

51. In order to promote pluralism in the media, Government will encourage the licensing of Free to Air Private TV channels.

CULTURE

52. Culture is a driving force in nation-building. Government reaffirms its unwavering commitment to artists to help sustain their creativity and bring Arts and Culture in the mainstream of the economy. Government will shortly publish the first-ever White Paper on Arts and Culture.

53. To provide school children with the opportunity to develop their musical talents, Government will provide all schools with a range of musical instruments.

54. A project entitled "*La ruée vers l'art*" will be introduced to direct arts amateurs and tourists to visit workshops and see artists at work, during a fortnight every year.

55. An "*Agora des Artistes*" will be set up at La Vigie, Curepipe comprising space for the practice of all artistic expressions, including a recording studio and exhibition facilities.

56. One stadium will be equipped in accordance with international norms to hold concerts.

57. Two additional *Centre de Formation Artistique* will be opened, one at La Gaulette and one at Trou d'Eau Douce.

58. To preserve our National Archives, Government will proceed with the construction of a modern infrastructure in Moka to house the archives with works starting in early 2013. Records of the National Archives will be restored and digitalised to make them accessible online to the public.

59. The existing Assistance Scheme for Artists will be reviewed in order to give a boost to artistic creativity and excellence in Arts.

60. A New Copyright Bill will be introduced to *inter-alia*, incorporate the provisions of the World Intellectual Property Organisation Copyright Treaty.

61. A Film Commission Bill will be introduced to give renewed impetus to the cinema industry and provide incentives to local and foreign film producers.

ANIMAL WELFARE

62. To ensure that animals are given humane care, Government will set up a modern animal hospital. A Trust will be set up to manage the hospital.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 5 : NATION

We have come a long way since Independence. Government's resolve is to Move Mauritius Forward by fostering a greater sense of belonging to our nation.

We have come a long way since independence and Government's resolve is to **Move Mauritius Forward** by fostering more prosperity, more democracy and a greater sense of belonging in our nation.

Government will take the lead in a national dialogue on perfecting our democracy, maintaining integrity, improving our diplomacy and ensuring that all parts of our country draw the benefits of development.

Honourable Members,

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

1. Retooling for the future requires a review of our Constitutional regime. We now have experience of our Constitutional Framework spanning over 44 years. In the light of this, we should, as a nation look at what works and what needs to be improved including reforms of our electoral system and the financing of political parties. Government will ensure that the country has an electoral system which is more equitable and which promotes nation building and provides for better representation of women.

2. The constitutional review will also look at the powers and mode of election of the President. Under our present Constitution, a President who does not derive his legitimacy directly from the people but from the National Assembly and is nominated by the Prime Minister can, in breach of established conventions, abuse this position to thwart the will of the elected Government. We have to ensure that there is no abuse of a privileged position to tarnish the reputation of our country and of our institutions and to impinge on the democratic process.

3. Constitutional reform requires the buy-in of the people at large and cannot be decided by the political class alone.

4. Government will introduce new enabling legislation providing for the people to be consulted by way of referendum on major constitutional and other issues.

5. As part of the enlargement of our "*espace démocratique*" and revitalisation of the role of Parliament, Government will invite the National Assembly to engage in thematic debates. This will enable the National Assembly to have, in addition to its legislative function, a major role as a deliberative organ on policy issues. Government will propose the appointment of an all-party committee to discuss the modalities of such debates. These debates should be non-partisan and focus on policy issues in the national interest.

INTEGRITY

6. Building strong institutions is a central challenge of development and key to eliminating corruption.

7. Government fully supports the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and reiterates its firm commitment to fight corruption by implementing international and regional anti-corruption instruments such as the United Nations Convention Against Corruption, the SADC Protocol against Corruption, and the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption.

8. Government will reinforce the capacity of public bodies to deter and detect risks of corruption in their respective systems and procedures.

9. To complement the Anti-Corruption Framework, public officers will be trained to act as "Integrity Officers" so that they can contribute to the establishment of an enduring ethical culture, help prevent corruption and effectively address it, and provide a public demonstration of the organisation's commitment to integrity.

10. As a second phase of the implementation of the Public Sector Anti Corruption Framework, public bodies will be called upon to adopt Corruption Risk Management techniques.

11. Furthermore, anti-corruption education for the youth will be intensified as a measure to build a corrupt-free future generation.

12. Government will introduce amendments to reinforce the existing legal framework, taking into consideration the observations of the Parliamentary Committee on ICAC.

13. Government strongly supports professionalism and highest ethical conduct in the media and will support training initiatives in this regard. Government is also conscious of the need to protect the interests of all citizens against invasion of privacy and unfounded attacks on their integrity or character and will introduce appropriate legislative amendments to this end.

Chapter 5 : Nation

DIPLOMACY

14. Mastering the realities of a new world entails a major restatement of the objectives of our diplomacy.

15. “*La diplomatie au service de l'économie*” will underpin the conduct of our foreign relations.

16. This requires:-

- Appropriate training for our diplomats and a reinforced framework for our Foreign Service;
- Strengthening cooperation with our traditional partners, and developing strategic economic partnerships with emerging countries in Africa, Asia, the Gulf and Latin America;
- A new Mission Statement for our Foreign Service that focuses on promotion of Mauritius as an investment destination and on trade and services agreements; and
- Reinforcing our capacity to participate in bilateral, regional and multilateral trade agreements to promote the interests of Mauritius.

17. Government will invite Honourable Members to enact a Foreign Service Act to revitalise our diplomatic service.

NURTURING PROUD AND RESPONSIBLE CITIZENS

18. Government believes that our unique plural diversity is not only a major strength but also a source of great pride in our national identity. We are committed to move even further in our Nation Building process. Government will initiate an innovative programme aimed at nurturing citizens who are filled with pride in their national identity.

19. Preliminary consultancy work has already been carried out for the setting up of the National Institute for Civic Education (NICE) whose main objective will be to instil character and nurture good citizens. It will do so by fostering a sense of shared human spirit, partnership for a common sense of purpose, and enterprise for the advancement of the nation. An initial pilot project will be run during the December 2012 school holidays for some 200 youths.

20. The Programme will comprise a Core Module which will focus on various themes such as Life-skills, Healthy Lifestyles, Human Values and Empathy, Personal and Social Discipline, Environmental Stewardship, Cultural

Creativity, Teamwork, and National Pride. A series of elective Tracks Module will also be available. Upon completion of the Core Module, a Capstone Ceremony involving participants and their families will be held. The ceremony will be focused around the concept of Proud Citizenship and Stewardship for the Nation.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

21. Government will ensure that local government services are improved to better meet the aspirations of citizens.

22. The governance and operations of Local Government authorities will be reviewed to bring them all to the same higher level of efficiency and effectiveness.

23. Government will:

- In accordance with the new Local Government Act, make arrangements for the splitting of the District Councils to bring services closer to local communities, for the development of a new Grant In Aid formula to ensure a fair and equitable distribution of central government grant amongst Local Authorities and to set up the Unified Local Government Service Board to optimise human capital in local authorities;
- Implement the new Solid Waste Management Strategy. Consultancy Services for the setting up of an Interim Hazardous Waste Facility at La Chaumière will be awarded this year;
- introduce the Mauritius Fire and Rescue Service Bill in the National Assembly by August 2012; and
- Start Construction of the new Rose Belle Fire Station by the end of 2012. In addition two new Fire Stations will be constructed in 2014-2015 namely, at Goodlands and Montagne Blanche.

24. A Land Use Planning Bill will be introduced to provide for strategic and detailed planning processes to promote investment opportunities and orderly development.

MOVING RODRIGUES & OUTER ISLANDS FORWARD

Honourable Members,

25. Government re-affirms its continued support to the development of Rodrigues as an integral part of the Republic of Mauritius while giving due regard to the specificities of the island.

26. Government will strengthen its partnership with the Regional Assembly to promote the sustainable development of Rodrigues to allow the decentralised system to grow to its full potential and maturity. The local population will be encouraged to participate fully in the socio-economic development of the island.

27. Government will continue to provide support to the modernisation of the infrastructure in Rodrigues and ensure further diversification of economic activities in the fields of Fisheries and Aquaculture, Agriculture and Tourism, including eco-tourism. Government will address the issue of water problem in Rodrigues.

28. Government will provide necessary support for the development of the ICT sector in Rodrigues. In order to do so, it will proceed with the laying of a sub-marine fibre cable to link Rodrigues to Mauritius, thus putting Rodrigues at par with Mauritius in term of connectivity.

29. New strategies will be adopted to enhance the collaboration between the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and the National Empowerment Foundation to put in place poverty alleviation programmes.

30. Government will further strengthen health related actions in Rodrigues and provision of high quality care and treatment to patients.

31. In the field of primary health care and public health, a Vaccination Centre for international travel will be set up and laboratory facilities for infectious diseases will be strengthened. In line with the recommendations of the survey on teenage pregnancies, an Action Plan will be formulated and implemented.

32. To further strengthen hospital services in Rodrigues, a master plan for hospital infrastructural projects will be developed, a telemedicine facility will be set up and a SAMU service will be introduced.

33. Since vessel traffic to Port Mathurin is expected to increase in the future, the Rodrigues Regional Assembly has been working with the Mauritius Ports Authority to improve navigation safety. Views of stakeholders are being sought to ensure minimal damage to the marine flora and fauna.

34. Land in Rodrigues is highly vulnerable to ecological hazards. As part of the MID project, Government will assist the Regional Assembly to develop a land use and suitability index for the island.

35. A Land Administration, Valuation and Information Management System (LAVIMS) will also be put in place to ensure an optimal management of land.

36. The Project Management and Delivery Unit under the Prime Minister's Office will work in close collaboration with the Rodrigues Regional Assembly on timely and effective project implementation.

37. Work on the construction of a new landing strip and the port in Agalega will start this year. A new Refugee Centre in South Island will also be constructed this year whilst new quarters will be provided for the residents. The Food Security Programme for Agaleans will be pursued. A new impetus will be given to coconut production by introduction of modern techniques. The use of renewable sources of energy in Agalega such as coconut oil as a substitute for diesel and solar energy will be tapped.

38. A Leisure Park will be constructed in Agalega to provide for recreational and sports facilities.

Moving the Nation Forward



CHAPTER 6 : SUSTAINABILITY

At the heart of Government's aim to Move the Nation Forward is the Maurice Ile Durable vision - the foundation for combining rising prosperity with better quality of life in harmony with nature.

At the heart of Government's aim to Move the Nation Forward is the Maurice Ile Durable vision - the foundation for combining rising prosperity with better quality of life in harmony with nature.

Honourable Members,

1. The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, better known as Rio +20 will be held in June this year, twenty years, after the Earth Summit held in Rio in 1992.

2. Government will bring its contribution to the global debate in Rio and looks forward to strong political commitment from the international community to promote Green Economy and giving due importance to the Oceans.

3. The Maurice Ile Durable (MID) Project which defines the vision of a modern and sustainable society is being implemented in a participative and democratic manner, reflecting the aspirations of the population and creating a strong sense of belonging to the nation.

4. Government is committed to integrating Sustainable Development concepts and norms into its overall policies. The MID vision will be further translated into concrete actions through the MID National Policy, a 10-year strategic framework and a 3-year Action Plan by July 2012.

5. A Sustainability Index is being developed to reflect the performance of the most sustainable companies trading on the Stock Exchange of Mauritius.

6. Government will also introduce an eco-classification of hotels based on criteria such as energy efficiency, environmental protection and best practices in hotel management.

WATER SECURITY

7. Water remains one of the most critical resources and needs to be judiciously managed. We need a new approach to its management if we are to sustain our economic goals and ensure a reliable and satisfactory water supply for our citizens.

8. Increased demand together with the effects of global climate change raise major challenges for countries across the world with respect to adequate availability of water. The United Nations recognise that water is now a

major issue that has to be addressed worldwide as many regions and populations will face water shortages.

9. Mauritius is already being increasingly impacted by climate change. Government is addressing the issue of water management in a holistic manner. A major reform programme is already being implemented as well as the elaboration of a plan to meet all future needs.

10. The key objectives of Government are:

- Improving Total Water Management System;
- Providing 24/7 potable water to all users; and
- Reducing non-revenue water to a minimum.

11. To promote greater efficiency, coherence and optimal use of resources, Government has decided on a major institutional reform in the water sector. All the four agencies currently involved in the management of water will be integrated into a single institution. This will benefit both present and future generations.

12. Government is investing heavily in the planning and improvement of the water supply infrastructure which will lead to a significant increase in storage capacity by 2015. Government which initiated the construction of the Midlands Dam in 1999 will complete the construction of the Bagatelle Dam in 2014. This will improve water supply in the Port Louis area and lower Plaine Wilhems.

13. Government will construct a new dam of 14 million cubic meters capacity at Rivière des Anguilles expected to be operational by December 2015, to cater for current and future demand in the south and south west of the island.

14. A diversion structure on Rivière du Poste will be completed in 2013 to divert flood flows into Mare aux Vacoas reservoir up to an estimated volume of some 10 Million cubic meters annually.

15. Flood flows from Tamarin river are being transferred to La Marie Treatment Plant increasing supply by 6,000 cubic metres daily.

16. These projects combined with actions already taken in recent years, such as the replacement of 140 kms of pipelines and the drilling of eight additional boreholes, would

Chapter 6 : Sustainability

enable Government to attain its objective of 24/7 supply of clean water for the population.

17. Furthermore, Government will legislate to ensure that hotels are equipped with their own water desalination plants.

ENERGY

18. Energy is another essential ingredient for a good quality of life and crucial for economic activity. Government action will focus on the SEA Strategy, that is Sustainability, Efficiency and Accessibility.

19. The Power Sector Expansion Plan is being implemented to provide a reliable electricity supply using least cost clean technologies including affordable renewable energy sources. Furthermore, measures will be implemented to promote energy saving and efficiency at all levels.

20. To encourage the use of renewable energy, the following actions are being taken :

- finalisation, with international contribution, of the Master Plan for Renewable Energy;
- Production of Electricity through wind turbines of 30 MW will be fed into the national grid in 2013;
- encouraging Small Independent Power Producers to increase the renewable energy mix and so further democratise the energy sector;
- commissioning a grid connected Solar PV farm of up to 10 MW;
- commissioning a hydro power plant at Midlands;

21. Whilst renewable energy will form an increasing proportion of our energy mix, it will still be necessary to use conventional power. To achieve this optimally:

- Government will conduct a feasibility study on the use of liquefied natural gas for electricity generation.
- A 100 MW clean coal power plant will be set up by 2015.

22. Regarding the production of ethanol, Government has already developed a framework for the use of E5 locally: 5% of ethanol blended with gasoline, and has amended the legislation accordingly. This also brings clear environmental benefits as it will reduce our dependency on

fossil fuels while increasing our production of renewable energy.

GREEN LIVING

Honourable Members,

23. Government's action on Environmental Health will put increasing emphasis on mitigating the problems of dangerous chemicals, smoke emissions and noise. With the support of the World Health Organisation, an action plan will be prepared to drive health sector adaptation to the effects of climate change.

24. Government will:

- launch a national campaign to promote environmental ethics;
- set up nine Eco-villages, which will demonstrate new ways of life conducive to environmental protection;
- further promote the concept of waste segregation, recycling and composting; and
- support the School Endemic Garden Project to enable our younger generations to understand the importance of biodiversity.

25. The Vallée d'Osterlog Endemic Garden which has a rich endemic flora and fauna will be enhanced into an eco-park for the benefit of all.

LAND

26. Significant changes are taking place in the economy and environment which have direct impact on the use of land. These call for an entirely new approach to land use and planning to ensure the sustainable management of this limited resource.

27. There is a need to strike the right balance between competing claims for land. In doing so, we must also protect the less fortunate citizens of our society.

28. The National Development Strategy (NDS) as the national planning instrument will set the vision of Government on Land Use Strategy for the next twenty years and will be reviewed to offer a dynamic spatial framework for land development

29. The Land Administration, Valuation and Information Management System Project

(known as LAVIMS) is being implemented to modernise and streamline land administration and management procedures.

30. Outline Schemes and Planning Policy Guidance are also being reviewed to promote and manage development in a sustainable way. User friendly guidelines will be prepared to sensitise the public and professionals on planning requirements for projects.

31. A Land Use Planning Bill will be introduced to provide for strategic and detailed planning processes to promote investment opportunities and orderly development.

32. Government will ensure that Outline Planning Schemes provide for innovative policies to cater for social housing needs and make dedicated provision for land to that effect.

33. Government will review the Morcellement Act to streamline procedures to ensure that projects comply with sustainability principles.

34. Government will propose a new policy on the use of land for different purposes.

35. Government will review the land acquisition process for the timely implementation of projects of national interest.

36. Government will consider the recommendations of the Truth and Justice Commission relating to land issues.

37. Government will accentuate its programme of protecting our biodiversity. The National Parks and Conservation Services will extend its surveillance of protected areas by more than 80% inclusive of private lands. It will intensify its effort to increase tree cover of our forests and will implement a re-forestation programme of the public beaches and of the ex-tea belts on the central plateaus. Legislation relating to the felling of trees on privately owned forest will be reviewed.

38. Government will adopt an integrated approach to all the policies relating to land, energy and water specially in the context of climate change and its possible impacts on our country.

39. A Prime Minister's High Level CLEWS Panel will be appointed to oversee all policies and measures relating to Climate, Land, Energy and Water Strategies. This will ensure better policy coordination and an overall integrated approach

to long term planning for future generations.

FISHERIES

40. The development of our ocean resources must be done together with those whose livelihoods depend on the sea. Government is aware that our artisanal and semi-industrial fishers are facing difficulties and will bring various measures to address their concerns.

41. Government's aim is to make sure that the work of fishers is always safe and sustainable and that they can make a decent living out of it.

42. Based on the principle of total allowable catch by species, Government will consult with fisher associations, scientists and relevant environmental groups to develop a regional fisheries management plan. Artisanal and recreational fishers with long experience in one locality will contribute to elaboration of the plan by providing finer level knowledge. The new management plan will lead to increase in knowledge of fish stocks and catches per unit of effort.

43. Legislation to provide for the new fisheries management plan will be introduced within a year. By 2013, it is expected that a broad level regional aggregation of output will be in place. By 2015, all coastal regions will be managed using annual catch entitlements giving each fisher ownership of an entitlement which will be freely transferred and aggregated.

44. The Fisheries Technical Division's role will become one of actively engaging with fishers – providing clear guidelines on entitlements and generally assisting in all forms of conflict resolution within and amongst associations and other coastal project developments.

45. The Albion Fisheries Research Centre will provide hands-on sharing of scientific knowledge ensuring best practices across regional associations.

46. Government will develop a fisheries master plan which, *inter-alia*, will analyse and propose options for a comprehensive sustainable fisheries development and management plan for Mauritius and Rodrigues.

47. Government will continue its policy of replenishing the lagoons.

Chapter 6 : Sustainability

48. The Fishermen Investment Trust and the Fishermen Welfare Fund will be reinforced to play a more important role in capacity building and empowerment of fishers.

THE AGRO-INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

49. The cane sector continues to face daunting challenges arising from the dismantling of the sugar protocol. Its viability may be even more affected by the continuing reform of the EU common agricultural policy, and domestically by the constant abandonment of lands by small planters.

50. Government will step up the ongoing reform to modernise and diversify the cane industry to ensure that this multi-functional cluster becomes more efficient and sustainable.

51. The recently established Mauritius Cane Industry Authority will as a matter of priority, address the issue of shrinking acreage under cane cultivation. The possibility of managing, on lease, abandoned small planters' lands is being considered.

52. The global food crisis has drawn attention to the vulnerability of our food security situation with an overwhelming dependency on imports and dangerous exposure to external shocks.

53. Government will continue to diversify and strengthen our agri-food production sector to make it modern, competitive and sustainable, with greater emphasis on securing food supply stability and safety.

54. The implementation of schemes under the Food Security Fund strategic plan has already yielded satisfactory results. This includes an increase in livestock production by 4.8% in 2011 and an increase in milk production by 55%. Government will continue to provide incentives to improve food self-sufficiency ratio of the country.

55. Government is proposing a coherent package of priority actions that cut across the agri-food supply chain and which will be implemented in partnership with all stakeholders:

- A redefinition of our land and agricultural policy leading to a better balance between sugarcane and other agricultural production. A new small scale agricultural policy will enhance the role of small planters;
- Innovative financial schemes that promote increased investments in infrastructure

and technologies such as small-scale mechanisation, hydroponics, agro-processing and bio-technologies;

- Offer of risk management schemes to stabilise incomes of small farmers including small animal breeders;
- Construction of a modern slaughter house in accordance with international standards to meet export norms.
- Improvement of access to markets, through a wholesale market and a review of the role of the agricultural marketing board;
- Institutional and human capacity building, including women Empowerment, with a focus on vocational training programmes for beginner agro-ecology entrepreneurs; and
- Strengthening governance to make our institutions deliver more effectively to benefit the farming community and the consumers.

COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE FOR BAGASSE

56. In addition to the measures announced in the 2012 Budget Speech, a comprehensive package will be proposed for planters producing bagasse which will include a review of the bagasse pricing and payment mechanism.

57. Based on the December 2007 historic deal between the Government and the MSPA, bagasse producers will be offered an ownership stake in the Independent Power Producers, through the Cane Democratisation Fund. This Fund will also enable all stakeholders of the cane industry to have a 35% stake across the cane industry.

Conclusion

Honourable Members,

1. We live in challenging yet exciting times. As we embark on the next stage of our development, the international environment is substantially different from what it was only a few years ago.
2. However whilst the context differs, Government will continue to be guided by firm principles. These same principles that have seen the nation improve its growth, and achieve historically stable economic performance and social justice.
3. This is the hallmark of a prosperous and inclusive society based on greater political and economic democratisation.
4. Our country has come a long way over the last seven years. More than ever, there are challenges ahead but the test of real leadership is to ride these waves and seize the new opportunities they present. It is about taking responsibility and securing a brighter future for our nation.
5. Government is confident that by focusing on the strengths of our people and of our society, we can achieve greater connectivity and prosperity in a sustainable way that is of benefit to all in **Moving the Nation Forward**.

Honourable Members,

6. I pray that the blessings of the Almighty may rest upon your counsels.