

**Speech of the Honourable Tassarajen Pillay  
Chedumbrum,**

Minister of Information and Communication  
Technology,

**National ICT Strategic Plan Workshop**

Date: Thursday 13 January 2011

Time: 9h30

Venue: Conference Hall, Cyber Tower 1, Ebene

**The Chairman of the National Computer  
Board, M. Suraj Ramgoolam**

**The Executive Director of the National  
Computer Board, Dan Faugoo**

**Head of Para-statal,**

## **Distinguished Guests,**

### **Ladies and Gentlemen**

The Government endorsed the National ICT Strategic Plan (NICTSP) 2007-2011 in October 2007. Under the NICTSP, Government's vision was to make of ICT the fifth pillar of the economy and transform Mauritius into a regional ICT hub.

Attaining this vision is dependent on Mauritius being transformed into a knowledge and information-based economy and society. An information-based economy would require measures that would enable the ICT sector to contribute significantly to the GDP of the nation, increase the employability opportunities in the ICT sector, and ensure that there is a sustained availability of skilled manpower for the sector and ICT exports contributing significantly to the exports basket.

This would necessitate a range of measures that would enable the expansion of the sector so to meet the

growing ICT needs of businesses and stimulate demands amongst citizens.

The mid-term review of the National IT Strategic Plan (NITSP)- 2007-2011 is one of the three activities undertaken under the Competitiveness and Public Sector Efficiency (CPSE) program which aims to sustain growth and employment, while helping Mauritius to address the impact of the global recession.

The Competitiveness and Public Sector Efficiency (CSPE) program aligns with the Mauritius' long-term development objectives, which centers economic development on moving away from low-wage, labor-intensive exports to more skilled, high value added, knowledge-based ones. It seeks to deepen the reforms initiated in 2006, and also supports more immediate Government's efforts (medium-term program 2009-2011) to help the country ride out the current economic turbulence.

This review, which is also recommended in the NICTSP action plan, has various objectives, namely assessing

whether Mauritius is on course to meeting the targets set in the NICTSP 2007-2011 and the progress of the implementation of the various projects in the NICTSP Action Plan and whether their objectives have been attained. The review will also cover the existing National Information Security Strategy and a strategy for an appropriate open access policy and broadband deployment.

Another objective of the NICTSP review is to propose and recommend remedial measures, if any, for projects that need to be reviewed in order to attain their intended objectives.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The objective of the Government is to transform Mauritius into an “Intelligent Mauritius” or an “I-Mauritius”. ICT is the fastest growing sector of our economy and is contributing tremendously towards an Intelligent Mauritius.

Figures speak volumes. Latest statistics pertaining to the ICT sector suggests that, for the year 2009, the value added of the ICT sector as a percentage of GDP stood at 5.7%. Based on Central Statistical Office estimates for the year ending 2010, this is expected to rise to 6.1%, demonstrating the resilience of the sector.

From an international level, Mauritius is ranked 2nd with an ICT Development Index of 3.44 in the African Region and 72nd on the international level among 159 countries, according to figures published by the International Telecommunication Union in March 2010. The latest UN E-government readiness index reveals that Mauritius is ranked 2nd, after Tunisia (0.4826) in the African continent with a score of 0.4645 and has a global rank of 77.

On this charted route towards an Intelligent Mauritius, we have already set the first milestones in the National ICT Strategic Plan 2007-2011 which englobed around 124 projects with a budget estimate of 1 billion rupees for increasing the efficiency of various sectors such as Education, Health, Industry and Tourism.

Government has announced its intention to make Internet even more affordable to the public and make “Access to the Internet” a basic citizen’s right in Mauritius. The whole island will be broad-band connected. Free broadband Internet is already being offered in many Post Offices, Social Welfare Centres and Community Centres. This service will now be extended to 30 additional post offices and 150 new centres, including Day Care Centres.

The National Computer Board provides basic ICT courses to various segments of the Mauritian community, including students and public servants. 100,000 people have already benefitted from IC3. An additional Cyber Caravan will be added shortly to the existing fleet of 2 caravans of the NCB to offer internet and training throughout the country. Besides the growing number tertiary institutions offering such courses, NCB has also launched an on-line programme with 2,700 courses available at very affordable fees.

The Proposed Mauritian ICT Academy envisions equipping the youths of Mauritius with knowledge, skills and international Certifications so that they can join the ICT industry in a big way. The Proposed ICT Academy will not only improve the skills sets and competencies of the Mauritian workforce but will also help in promoting Mauritius as a world class destination for ICT related activities.

The Government Online Centre already offers services to all Ministries and Para-Statals, be it for their e-mail or web sites. Certain fundamental e-government projects are being developed namely the e-Government applications such as e-Parliament, e-Register, e-Health, and e-Prisons; the national Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) is being set up to enhance the security of electronic transactions; the Electronic ID Card project and the Crime Occurrence Tracking System are high-priority projects. The e-Government will increase competitiveness and productivity.

Before ending, I would like to thank the consultants who have so far done a good job. I am sure that we will have

an excellent report which I will be endeavor to implement so as to make the ICT sector a strong pillar of our economy.

With these words, Ladies and Gentlemen, I declare this Workshop officially open.

**Thank you for your attention**