

**Speech by Hon. (Mrs) L.D. Dookun-Luchoomun.**  
**Minister of Education and Human Resources,**  
**Tertiary Education and Scientific Research**  
**London College of Accountancy Graduation Ceremony**  
**MGI Auditorium, Moka**  
**24 October 2016**

**Dear Graduants,**

A very good afternoon to you all. Thank you for inviting me to share this glorious moment with you in today's event.

It is both a distinct pleasure and an honour for me to address you all on the occasion of this Graduation Ceremony of the London College of Accountancy. We are all gathered here this afternoon to celebrate these graduants' success, a success achieved through sheer dint of perseverance, hard work, sustained effort and determination.

That's the kind of commitment one expects from those engaging themselves in any kind of formal learning, the more so for high level studies.

And I am happy, dear Graduants, that you have lived up to the expectations of one and all, but especially and most certainly, your own.

Indeed, nothing strikes a richer chord in us than when we set targets for ourselves—and realise we have successfully gone beyond them!

This is one of the first rich lessons that we should all learn.

Again, the road that has taken you to where you are today has probably not always been smooth, not always a pleasure ride. I suppose it could have been bumpy at times, what with the many hurdles that tend to

crop up along the way. But you have known how important it had been to hold a tight ship and navigate your way through the sometimes rough seas.

Lesson no 2 therefore is basically this: we all have to learn to make ours the adage, *"When faced with a challenge, look for a way, not a way out."*

And lesson No 3 is as important: your graduation is a consequence of strong commitment to your professional development. But let it not be a mere ersatz indicator of the level that you can effectively attain.

Let it not be just a flash in the pan.

Rather, I would urge you to consider it as the cornerstone, a linchpin in your life-long learning process leading towards a fruitful career in the field of Accountancy.

### **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As I applaud the graduating students, I also need to have some congratulatory words for the parents present here today, as well as for the Lecturers. This is as much your success as it is that of your children and learners respectively.

They may have written, through their personal efforts, this chapter of their lives but you have been much more than mere scribbled notes in the margins.

You have added the gloss, the shine to their crown. Today is as much your day as it is theirs when these graduates gain academic recognition both nationally and internationally.

And I hardly need to stress that their success for such an internationally recognized qualification is a matter of equal pride for the country as it is for you.

Congratulations to you all for pinning your faith in these achievers of the day.

**Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Graduants,**

This Award Ceremony is an apt reminder that the world is now a global village. We are today operating at the cusp of a different kind of thinking where employment is not geographically and spatially restrictive. Your accounting qualification now equips you with sufficient academic knowledge to consider employment in an array of industries--- and these can be local or international. Every industry needs accountants, be it the manufacturing section, the hotel industry, the construction sector or the fashion industry, to name a few.

Money drives the world, it is said, and accountants are very much required to ensure the traceability of money well-earned and well spent.

And that is the golden rule for all accountants in any part of the world. It is the alignment of their knowledge acquired, their skills and competencies developed with the changing demands of the market.

You who operate in this domain are lucky in that there is a proper fit between the market demand and the skills cum competency provision. Elsewhere, it is not always the case. My Ministry is fully aware of the new necessity for our tertiary education providers to seek to attenuate the skills mismatch issue that is so often highlighted.

But let us not have our heads in the sand. Some sort of a mismatch will always be there. The labour market has a way of being vibrant, unpredictable and in a state of constant effervescence. A full adaption of skills and competencies to the new demands may well be a tricky proposition.

Coping strategies therefore have to be instilled and embedded right from an early age. I genuinely believe that an education system has to

build a strong foundation for further learning and adaptation to new and challenging environments. The acquisition of 21<sup>st</sup> century and deep learning skills is just as important as is the concern for equity in catering for the diverse interests and learning needs of all children.

Let me hasten to add that the education reforms across the sector are thus geared towards learner empowerment—and that includes empowerment to adapt to the changing landscape-- economic, financial or social.

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

It is part of Government's broad vision to transform Mauritius into an Education Hub. And tertiary Education has to be the central driver for the whole enterprise. This pre-supposes that the sector must lend itself to a stronger local and international credibility and match international benchmarks.

While we are partisans of the internationalisation of tertiary education, Mauritius will however not cave in to a 'Wild West' scenario: we are ascertaining the prevalence of relevant regulatory and safeguarding mechanisms that, among other things, will call for a closer monitoring of cross-border education quality.

Hence, proper legislation is in the pipeline to nip in the bud any spurious claims about programmatic quality of private providers of higher education. Quality provision and quality services have to be the norm and not the exception.

And this applies as well to professional education. You will be glad to know that one important aspect of professional education being looked into by my Ministry concerns the portability of education acquired in Mauritius.

We want educational programmes run in Mauritius to be recognized in different countries of the world, and to allow Professionals trained in

Mauritius to acquire the recognition to be able to work in other countries. We want our qualified youngsters to spread their wings and realize that Africa, for example, sits just next door-- a booming Continent, earmarked to have a double digit growth in the near future. Hence, I would urge this august assembly to think in the broadest sense possible and look beyond the insular horizons. You are the professionals whose skills and professional labour is likely to be in huge demand over the next years.

However, while your efforts are likely to be conducive towards developing the economy of this country, do not forget the utmost and paramount obligation to adhere to sound and ethical good practices in your field of activity.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

It is always a matter of immense pride and satisfaction to see the ever progressive steps made by the London College of Accountancy to promote itself as a centre of excellence in the education of professionals in the field of accountancy, among others.

I am confident that the College will continue to train and impart the right skills needed to budding accountants and thus enable them to drive our country's economic growth.

Congratulations are therefore in order for the management of the London College of Accountancy for its vision and sustained effort in ensuring quality professional education to its students.

**Dear Graduants,**

Let me end by once again congratulating all of you for your success, and conveying to you my best wishes for your careers and growth.

It is my earnest entreaty that all of you canalise your professionalism towards making Mauritius and the world a better place to work, live and prosper in.

***Thank you.***