

**Speech of Hon ( Mrs) L.D.Dookun- Luchoomun  
Minister of Education & Human Resources  
Tertiary education & Scientific Research**

**SECONDARY SCHOOL SENSITIZATION CAMPAIGN  
14 March 2016**

***Educators and Students***

***Ladies and Gentlemen***

**Good Morning/ Good Afternoon.**

I am pleased to be in your midst today for the official launch of this sensitization campaign. The purpose, as it is clear to all, is to inform students about the possibilities, both existing and those likely to emerge in the areas related to the Maritime Sector.

As you can see, this awareness campaign is one of the three pillars of the Action Plan that my Colleague Hon Koonjoo and his Ministry have come up with. I must say that, from an educational perspective, my Ministry fully subscribes to this objective of informing students about possibilities for future careers that exist in the sector.

**Dear Educators and Students,**

Nobody today questions the core, the central purpose of education. The needs of people have to be served—and the fact that these needs are diverse because the population is diverse should not deflect us or make us depart from this cardinal purpose.

But simultaneously, we have to see beyond the tips of our noses—we should not be guided exclusively by short term interests.

Sustainability has to be aimed at.

And sustainability can only be achieved through the provision of an education that both is of high quality and encourages far-sightedness.

Thus, we must recognize that education is the primary agent to catalyze economic growth and eradicate poverty.

It therefore behooves us to look far ahead and canalize our young people in the right direction. We want a highly educated and fully satisfied youthful population.

We want you to be in employment that is highly productive. Employment that will contribute to your self-esteem and fulfil your self-worth.

Statistics tell us that we have currently some 1500 unemployed graduates and, while we have come up with programmes like the “Graduate Training for Employment Scheme”, we realise that we cannot ask our youth to take a shot in the dark with regard to their career path.

In addition, there is also another practice that we have to struggle against. And this, the students present here—at least some of you—are quite familiar with. It is known in Mauritius that parents and the elder members of the family are often the ones to decide upon the choice of a career for their children. A tracking of such students would clearly show that many of them are often misled and take up jobs that are not commensurate with their innate potential.

Hence the need of efficient guidance and counseling of youth to secure the foundation of a future career.

This is one area I intend to look at very closely at the level of my Ministry. The HRDC that operates under the auspices of my Ministry has been giving that issue some serious consideration.

I also believe that career guidance is a service that can and must be worked out collaboratively with the private sector and with employers. Employers are indeed the ones who can counsel and guide students more accurately regarding jobs and emerging careers. The private sector is also the one that can best provide the hands-on experiential learning, through field trips and internships that are so conducive to getting “a feel” of a job.

### **Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, Educators and students**

My Colleague, Hon Koonjoo, has already taken up broadly the thrusts in the Economic Mission Statement presented in August last year. The Rt Hon Prime Minister then highlighted the different fields that are going to be the pillars on which the prosperity and future development of Mauritius will be based.

That statement was also an opportunity to present the new economic model chosen for the development of the country, a model centered on such core areas as

- ✚ A revamped manufacturing base
- ✚ A rethinking of the services sector
- ✚ A new booster to the information Technology and Communication sector
- ✚ The development of the Ocean Economy

## **Dear Students,**

Consider just this last, the Ocean Economy.

At the upper end, research in Ocean-related sciences will be enabled. The UoM already has a faculty of Ocean Studies. But the jobs related to the maritime sector will also require technical expertise in various fields.

You do realise then the number of job openings that will be available to you both in the land based and offshore maritime sectors. Some of you may choose to work in the Port development and shipping domain.

The transformation of Mauritius into a Regional hub for container transshipment as well as for petroleum products is already on the cards.

Aquaculture will be promoted, including the development of a central hatchery. Marine services like ship building, repairs, insurance, etc. will automatically be given a boost. You will therefore understand why we believe the Ocean Economy, as a whole, will create some 25,000 jobs, of which some 20,000 will be in the maritime sector.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,** If there is one expectation that people have of a Government, it is that it creates the 'infrastructure' for job creation.

And that is precisely high on this Government's agenda. And this has already received an international echo.

For those of you who have been following international developments, you would by now be familiar with the concept of the

Sustainable Development Goals, the SDGs. These are the 17 Global Goals that the world community now subscribes to.

For once, I will not be talking about the Global Goal 4 which is the Education Goal . Rather. I would wish to concentrate on Goal 8 which reads thus,

*“ Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all .”*

This clearly recognizes that the creation of jobs is central to sustainable development—but not just any job: it is jobs that provide sound wages, offer dignity of work, and create opportunities to develop new skills.

A recent document called “ Foresight Africa” by the Africa Growth initiative at Brookings Institute in the US refers to a U.N. My World survey carried out with over 5.7 million people in developing countries. In that survey, when queried as to what contributed most to their families’ welfare, respondents ranked “better job opportunities” third globally, after good education and health care.

That, ladies and gentlemen, tells the whole story. Everyone is avid for a better job opportunity.

And it is our duty to know where such prospects exist and where they loom large.

**Dear Students,**

Today’s meeting has this specific purpose attached to it. We want you to know about one area, one field, that opens wide its doors for

you. We want you to be sensitized about the maritime industry, to know about the openings that will be available.

Remember always that manpower will be a strong pre-requisite if we want to achieve a degree of success in such a venture. In short, you are the ones who will propel the economy of tomorrow to new heights.

You are the ones who will be at the helm and consolidating the future. The openings are there. We the adults have already scanned the environment for you and we are paving the way for you. But the determination, the willingness to go in that direction, must come from you and you only.

The scope is there and it is now up to you to gauge the nature of jobs and careers that best fit in with your capacity, and determine where you fit in best. This will then help you to determine and select the subjects that are best calibrated to those fields.

***I wish you all the best in the choices that you will make and thank you for your attention.***