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**15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAURITIUS QUALIFICATIONS
AUTHORITY
MONDAY 08 MAY 2017 at 15.00 HOURS
MQA RECEPTION AREA
PONT FER PHOENIX**

Ladies and Gentlemen It is indeed a pleasure for me to be amongst you this afternoon on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority.

It is a very special day for the staff of MQA as it represents one of the peaks of achievement, the culmination of much hard work accomplished over these 15 years.

MQA is where it is today thanks to the people who have shown their commitment and dedication to fulfill the mandate of the Authority.

But fifteen years is just one peak— we have many more to look forward to. We have to sustain our efforts to make of the MQA an institution that makes a difference.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 15 years that have elapsed since the Mauritius Qualifications Authority (MQA) came into existence on 08 May 2002, have obviously not been challenge-free. But challenges are there to be faced and overcome—and I must say that you have all contributed to rise above

them. Your combined efforts have resulted in the MQA being today a mature and full-fledged organization. It is an institution that is not only known at national level but has also become a reference in the African region.

Perhaps the best tribute I can pay to the institution and to you all who work towards the fulfilment of its mandate is by making mine the words of Jean Monnet. This eminent French political economist and diplomat wrote in his *Mémoires*:

“Rien n’est possible sans les hommes. Rien n’est durable sans les institutions”.

Dear Friends,

As Minister for Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research, I have taken note of the achievements and contribution of the Authority in shaping the education and training landscape.

None of us can deny the essential role the education and training system play in our society. It is a truism that a well-functioning education and training system, characterized by high quality and flexibility, is an essential precondition for promoting growth and also wealth.

In effect, one of its cardinal goals is to provide the skills and competences that are recognized and accepted within the labour market.

However, after 15 years, the time has also come for reflection—reflection on the way ahead and reflection on how this Institution can deliver even better on its mandate.

We are all aware of the modern day necessity of emphasizing the skilling, up-skilling and re-skilling of our workforce. It is very important that individuals keep acquiring new skills throughout their lives to respond to the dynamic human resource needs of the country.

There is always a pressing need to foster confidence for the future among our people, especially in a context where we are aiming at becoming an HIC, a high income country. The new challenge for the Authority, for you all, is to set up the necessary preconditions for lifelong learning while simultaneously reaching out to all the low-skilled and those who are struggling to get a foothold on the labour market.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I need not labour the point further. You know the task ahead and you know that, at times, it will be an uphill one. But you can and you will confront it and fulfil it.

Very much as you have been delivering on your mission so far.

Indeed, it is a matter of pride that the MQA has successfully established a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and this NQF has, as a result of its reliability and different qualifications pathways

that it offers, been instrumental in driving the educational reform at national level. As such, in the wake of the nine year schooling reform, national qualifications like the PSAC and National Certificate of Education have already been benchmarked on the NQF.

On the other hand, how can I not extend my appreciation to the successful implementation of the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) as an inclusive instrument to broaden access to education and training in Mauritius and Rodrigues?

Add to that the development of a Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for the TVET Sector in Mauritius. I also note that the MQA would be implementing a pilot project on Quality Assurance Framework this month with some twelve training institutions before coming with the full implementation in January next year.

All these above- mentioned achievements, ladies and gentlemen, are highly laudable and deserve a strong mention.

And what is crucial is the fact that the MQA has deemed it important to fulfil its ambitious agenda while working in active collaboration with the different stakeholders.

You obviously cannot go wrong there!

With this, Ladies and Gentlemen allow me to congratulate the Board Members, the Ag. Director and all the staff of the MQA who, through their unflinching and continuous efforts, are realising the goals set by the Authority.

Fifteen years is one milestone in the lifespan of an institution. There will be many such others. As you strive to conquer new peaks, as you venture into new endeavors, rest assured of my constant and unwavering support all the way through.

I thank you all for your kind attention.