Address by the Hon. Sutyadeo Moutia,

Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms

Stakeholders Validation Workshop Performance Management

Intercontinental Resort, Balaclava Fort

Tuesday 16 October 2012 @ 0900 hrs

Mr. Sateeaved Seebaluck, Senior Chief Executive of my

Ministry,

Permanent Secretaries

Delegates from the

Commonwealth

Representatives of Unions,

Members of the Press,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,
A very Good Morning to you all!

It is indeed an honour for me to be present among you all for the opening of the three days’ Stakeholders Validation Workshop on Performance Management System. Mauritius is pleased to host this forum and I welcome our collaborators from the Commonwealth Secrétariat and delegates from Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Tanzania.

I wish you all a pleasant stay in Mauritius and I hope you will meet the objectives of this workshop and come up with a fine-tuned document that would serve both as a database and benchmark for other countries of the region.
I understand that you, delegates from the four countries, will work together with the representatives of the Mauritian Civil Service to:

- review the country case studies as reported by the consultants; and
- agree on the final version of the case studies as well as of the synthesis chapter.

Upon validation of the final version on the model of strategic performance management, it will gain the status of a reference document on implementation of performance management in developing countries in this part of the world with due respect to individual country specificities.

It would, in fact, be a long way ahead since the 4th Forum of Heads of the African Public Service held in South Africa in
2007 wherein it was agreed that the Commonwealth Secretariat would make documentation of case studies on Public Administration and Service Delivery in Africa.

The Commonwealth Secretariat had assigned the responsibility to Atos Consulting to study the systems in place in these countries to identify commonalities and any emerging themes in the Performance Management field in these countries.

Since the Consultant has completed the study, this workshop provides the right forum for constructive discussions among delegates from the five countries.
Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

At this gathering of senior management of the Civil Service in Mauritius, I should not have the least hesitation to state that we are in the midst of a major reform process. Government is committed to ensure that the Civil Service continues to play a key role in the socio-economic transformation in Mauritius.

In the address to the nation the President of the Republic made it clear that, I quote:

“Government will pursue its objective of modernizing the Civil Service and will provide it with all the resources required to sustain the delivery of high quality services with efficiency and dedication.” (Unquote)
You are all aware that, against all odds in the economic front in the developed world with their ensuing adverse impact on our island economy, government is implementing the recommendations of the Report of the Pay Research Bureau.

When civil servants in Greece and Spain have not been paid their 13th month, when public sector wages are being reduced by more than 12%, when countries with many natural resources are unable to pay compensations, the Mauritian government, led by Dr. Navin Chandra Ramgoolam, is not denying civil servants a pay increase as we believe that we should continue to motivate the human resource.

We have done it in 2008, at the time when the world was experiencing the worst global financial crisis since the 1930’s.
The second wave of the crisis is having its toll today in the formerly robust economies of Europe. Salaries are frozen, bonus abolished, pensions are melting. Employment in civil service is at stake in many countries. The crisis is not over yet.

In Mauritius, we do not have any natural resource and yet we have not postponed implementation, we are not proceeding by phase, and we are not rejecting the recommendations. We are implementing all the recommendations. On top of that, we are still recruiting in the civil service.

We have also decided that the Report on anomalies and omissions should be published as early as end of February next instead of October 2013.
In return, we expect to accelerate the reforms process with the help of all stakeholders. I am informed that Ghana and Kenya have made a top-down approach in implementation of the performance management system. In our case, we have somehow focused very lengthily on individual performance, suggesting a bottom-up approach.

Whatever merits there might be in this approach, there is a dire need to evolve to strategic performance management roping in the Accounting Heads and leaders of public sector organizations in the process.

The public sector is the implementation arm of government policies and it is expected to deliver on promises and commitments in the Government Programme. We expect
that this forum will come up with ideas and suggestions based on experience of participating countries to advise on development of a mechanism to monitor and evaluate the performance of the public sector and the persons leading the organizations at the level of each ministry and department with regards to timely delivery of results.

Perhaps, we may learn from our friends on the implementation of PMS from that angle for securing indiscriminate coverage in view of a smarter Civil Service.

It will certainly enhance accountability at programme level in ministries and departments for a direct and clear linkage of the key performance indicators at individual level with programme level performance indicators.
Ladies and gentlemen, a smarter Civil Service calls for well designed strategies focused on effective Performance Management as one of its main strengths. We must reinforce existing strategy and develop new ones where the right standards are chosen for the right reasons.

The PMS is a strategic tool to ensure that there is agreement among individuals at the different levels of the organization through effective communication on the vision, mission, objectives and goals.

The report by Atos Consulting highlights that the Performance Management System which was adopted as the main strategic tool in Mauritius in 2005, focuses on the improvement of the Performance of individual Civil Servants.
Programme Based Budgeting, the other reform initiative, which was introduced in 2007 aims at cost efficiency of outcomes at programme level from a more strategic angle and focuses on organizational performance.

My Ministry is responsible for the implementation of Performance Management System across the whole public sector. The annual Confidential Report is being phased out as from 2013. We are willing to walk the additional miles taking into consideration our country realities to ensure that each individual officer, regardless of the position in the hierarchy, improves delivery standards to meet stakeholders’ expectations.

Ladies and gentlemen, my Ministry is also using other strategic tools to improve delivery, namely ISO Certification,
Customer Service Charter, Public Service Excellence Awards, Customer/Counter improvements and Mystery Shopping. We are also working on furthering our e-government effort and a Human resource Management Information System.

My Ministry is conscious of the numerous socio-economic challenges both on the local and international fronts and we are aware that the Civil Service needs to be adequately equipped with the right mix of competencies, skills and attitude. In order to ensure that we have quality human resources, we are working on a Civil Service College project.

I am pleased to announce that after securing approval from Cabinet, we have made sensible progress with regard to the
Civil Service College which will become operational before the end of this year.

With this note, I encourage you all in your task of validating and finalizing the report on the current state of Strategic Performance Management.

I also seize the opportunity to extend my personal thanks and that of the government of Mauritius to the Secretary General of the Commonwealth and the dedicated team at its secretariat who are providing their unconditional support for reforms of the Civil Service in this part of the world.
I now have the privilege and honour to declare the workshop open. Thank you for your attention.