SPEECH

By the

HONOURABLE MINISTER ALAIN WONG, MSK

ON THE OCCASION OF THE

WORKSHOP FOR PROMOTION OF

TICAD VI & TRAINING NEEDS FOR MAURITIUS FOR THE YEAR 2017

Le Sirius Labourdonnais Hotel,

Port Louis, Mauritius

22 August 2016 at 09.00 Hours

Mr. Premhans Jhugroo, Senior Chief Executive, Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms

Members of Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

- Mr Akira NISHIMOTO, Chief Representative
- Ms Ayumi TAKAHASHI, Program Director
- Ms Manoela RAZAFIMAHEFA, Program Officer

Heads and Representatives of all Ministries / Departments

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen.

A very good morning to you all.
I would like to extend my gratitude and thanks to the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration & International Trade as well as other stakeholders concerned in one way or other with the organization of this workshop.

The objective of to-day’s workshop is to sensitize and share information with representatives of different Ministries/Departments relating to the promotion of the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and to discuss on the training needs of some key ministries.

As you are already aware the Sixth TICAD Summit will be held on 27th and 28th of August in Nairobi with the theme “Advancing Africa’s sustainable development agenda ~ TICAD partnership for prosperity”. This is the first time this summit is being held in the African Continent.

TICAD actively promotes South-South Cooperation between Asia and Africa, which represents an opportunity for Mauritius to act as a bridge between Japan and Africa. Mauritius participated in the Fifth TICAD Summit held from 31 May to 03 June 2013 in Yokohama, Japan and I am told that a high level delegation from Mauritius will attend the sixth TICAD Summit.
We highly appreciate and congratulate Japan, as co-host of these conferences giving its unflinching support and commitment for the African development issues. Here, I would like to say that when speaking of African development, one cannot help mentioning the name of Nelson Mandela who rightly said that:

*Quote*

“Our human compassion binds us the one to the other - not in pity or patronizingly, but as human beings who have learnt how to turn our common suffering into hope for the future.”

*Unquote*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Taking into account the laudable contribution of JICA in the development projects in the African region, I cannot prevent myself from saying a few words on this agency.

JICA’s assistance to Mauritius dates back to early 1980s for the construction of the Albion Fisheries Research Centre in addition to several technical cooperation projects in the field of aquaculture.
JICA has become **one of the largest bilateral development organizations in the world**. It is also responsible for administering part of Japan's grant aid-technical cooperation, and grant aid and concessional loans, contributing to global development strategies, strengthening collaboration with international institutions and being better communicating Japan's position on major development and aid issues.

I wish to extend my sincere thanks to JICA as an independent governmental agency of Japan which has proved to be a highly important channel bringing support to needy countries through the coordination the Official Development Assistance. It is mandated to assist in the economic and social growth in developing countries and in the promotion of international cooperation. In fact, JICA is an embodiment of compassionate action. I seize this opportunity to congratulate JICA for its constructive contributions to development in Africa.

**Within the framework of TICAD, Japanese Technical Cooperation has a focus on the following sectors in so far as Mauritius is concerned:**

- Fisheries;
- Environment and Climate Change;
Disaster Risk Reduction;
Renewable Energy; and
Wastewater Management.

Japan has been providing valuable support to the Ministries/Departments concerned in regard to numerous projects, among others, in:

- coastal protection and rehabilitation programme;
- landslide management programme; and
- various projects in the fisheries sector.

In this context, as both Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms and Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, Disaster and Beach Management, I will personally ensure that the Public Service in general and the country at large make the most of this assistance and support.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would here like to refer to some other important areas in which JICA has been active:

- Grand Baie Sewerage Project to the tune of 7 billion Yen (partly grant and partly loan) This project aims at improving sewerage treatment by connecting approximately 6000 houses
to the existing treatment plan in the Grand Baie area. The implementing agency is the Waste Management Authority; This project will thus be highly beneficial in the development of this area as a tourist attraction;

- **Technical Advice for water treatment process engineering to the tune of 47 million Yen.** The objective of the project is to improve techniques on operations and maintenance of water treatment plants with a view to having safer and better quality of potable water. The implementing agency is the Central Water Authority.

- **Construction of the Fisheries Training and Extension Centre (FiTEC) at Pointe aux Sables.** This Centre has been very helpful in providing training to enhance development in fisheries sector for Mauritius.

In addition to the above, during the holding of the 5th Conference of TICAD in Japan in June 2013, Tokyo pledged an amount of US 2 billion to support low carbon energy projects for the whole African continent under the Africa Adaption Programme-Climate Change. With a view to benefitting from such projects, Mauritius is currently in the process of finalizing inter-ministerial
consultations for the possible signing of an Agreement with Japan (Low carbon Growth Agreement).

Now, for the sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development it is expected that the focus of TICAD will be on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

With a view to establishing a more efficient meteorological observation system for Mauritius, Japan is currently providing substantial support for the installation of a Meteorological Doppler Radar System and the construction of a radar tower at Trou aux Cerfs. This highly sophisticated radar system will be a vital tool in advance meteorological projection in the future.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

Education and Training are key Instruments for strengthening Human Resource Capacity necessary for helping organizations to grow and develop.

The Japanese Government through the JICA has been making effective contribution to capacity development for officers in the Mauritian Public Sector. The JICA Training Program is among the
main components of Technical Cooperation of Japanese Official Development Assistance, and Mauritius is continuously benefitting from this training program.

We really appreciate the substantive financial support of the Japanese Government, in enhancing the capacity of our Public Service through high quality training and development adapted to the developmental needs for the country. It is good to note that 108 Mauritian public officers have followed the JICA training programs from 2007 to 2016. I am confident that all those who have benefitted from the rich knowledge and expertise have gained in terms of value-added to both their personal and professional growth. In turn they have certainly contributed positively to the development, progress and prosperity of Mauritius.

It is important also to remind ourselves that whatever knowledge, skills and competencies acquired and whatever opportunities are made available, have always be disseminated and shared among peers so as to multiply the benefits of training obtained.

To ensure that the right training is dispensed to our public officers in future, this workshop is also aimed at identifying the
training needs of the different sectors for the next fiscal year. I therefore appeal to all representatives of Ministries/Departments to come up with concrete training proposals in line with the objectives and goals of their respective organisations which will be officially transmitted to the Japanese authorities.

Furthermore, during this workshop discussion will be held on the African Business Education Initiative which was launched at the TICAD in 2013. This initiative aims at enabling young African people from both public and private sectors to foster industrial expansion in their home countries, and to encourage more business partnerships between Japan and Africa. I take the opportunity to also welcome our young representatives from Board of Investment and the Waste Water Management Authority to take part in this workshop.

**Ladies and Gentlemen.**

Let me add that, through our bilateral Agreement on Friendship, Technical, Economic and Scientific cooperation, Japan has been supporting our country’s efforts, in various areas such as Human Resources Development, Project Financing as well as provision for the services of experts.
As you are aware, the overall aim of the training programs offered by JICA is to help enhance the capacity of human resources required for the country’s development. This aim is grounded on the urgent need for improving the workforce geared to the benefit and socio-economic development of any country in the world.

Once again I express my deepest gratitude and thanks to the Government of Japan, through JICA for its unwavering support to Mauritius.

I now have the pleasure to declare this Workshop officially open and I wish you all constructive and fruitful deliberations.

I thank you all for your kind attention.