

Speech on the occasion of the Annual Delegates of the Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions

My dear colleague, Toolsyraj Benydin

Mr the President,

Brother and Sisters of the FCSOU,

Thank you for inviting me on this great occasion.

Today, we are facing a huge challenge, the modernisation of the Civil Service.

As a federation, the FCSOU has consistently given its full support to the ongoing reform process. It shows that as employees of the State, you have understood the need for change, for us to be able to be on an equal footing with foreign countries. As a representative of the employees of the State, this federation has shown that it cares for the destiny for this country.

Many among you here have been working for Mauritius for the last twenty years. For Some, it has been more. In the name of the Government of Mauritius, I thank you for your long and loyal services, dedicated for the embetterment of the lives of our citizens.

You have showed how faithful you are to the nation whenever various governments called for your collaboration in times of need. I, personally, am a democrat. I believe that problems can be solved after each and every have exchanged views, ideas and experience. Our goal, yours and mine, are common, the progress of this country. And so, my friends, I consider you as partners. I consider you as equals.

Dear Friends,

Your organization exists since before independence. Year 1956 if I recall well, is the year this union was born, making of you 61 years old. Making of you older than our independent nation, that will celebrate its 50th anniversary next year, in March.

The founding fathers of your organization have seen and lived through the colonial administrative system that had the reputation of being very disciplined and effective workforce, you will be remember. A system that I will refer today as Public Service 1.0.

My Friends,

The Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions, once known as Federation of Civil Service Unions has known this era. Your founding fathers, I am sure, today, as you celebrate your 61st anniversary, will be proud of your achievements as members of this union.

You registered and was subsequently granted recognition by the government one year after its creation, in May 1957. In the pre-independence era, Mauritius' public administration was formed of bright minds. I can say so, with confidence, based on observation I have made from interaction I have on a daily basis with the top cadres in my Ministry. They joined the civil service in the early 1970s, but were trained by seniors who surely had to be very good professionals for them to form as efficient and reliable as they are.

This Federation has ever since its creation, played important roles in improving the conditions of work of civil servants. I, personally, having been part of the generation which reached adulthood in the 1970s, do remember the hardships that the public administration, back then, had to face. Strain on resources, a very rigid organizational chart and poor infrastructure were making life difficult for the employees. And yet, it is the same generation that pulled this country out of poverty in the 1980s. Our generation made up Public Service 2.0.

You have played a pivotal developmental role in the growth of the country. Many among us, today, had only a Higher School Certificate when they first joined. And then climbed the ladder, followed professional courses, funded by the State or under scholarships from foreign powers. Slowly but surely we liberalized the country to make of it, one of the most dynamic and freest economies in the world and the best place to live, in Africa. This is the fruit of the hard work of an entire generation. The fruit of your hard work, dear members of the FCSOU.

Today, many among you enjoy much higher salaries and safer jobs at entry level or even professional level, as in comparison to your counterparts in the private sector.

There are many advantages that you benefit from. That have been won due to the several struggles of your Federation.

Today, this government is coming forward with more facilities that will surely improve your conditions of work.

Support us in this endeavor!

In this administrative system of ours, meritocracy is functioning. Whether you are a man or a woman or part of a minority group in society,

if you are worthy, you will be promoted.

I know for a fact that we have living examples here, of people entering at clerical levels and now working at management level.

Historically, I have been told, the **FCSOU** has to its credit various achievements that have reshaped the civil service, in particular

The reduction in the hours of work

The end of year bonus

The establishment of a permanent machinery for reviewing of pay and grading structures and conditions of service through the Pay Research Bureau

And the facilitation of negotiations between affiliates and the Ministries/Department.

I think it should continue in this path. When the reform will be completed, the employees of the State shall evolve in a more dynamic environment.

They will be empowered with the several tools that will enable them to increase their productivity and enjoy better job conditions.

The FCSOU will be part of Public Service 3.0.

Happy Anniversary!