

**ADDRESS BY HON D. GOKHOO,  
MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE  
AND RESEARCH**

**Cheques Remittance Ceremony  
Short Film Competition 2009**

**Friday 30 October 2009  
at 15 30 hrs**

**La Petite Canelle, Domaine Les Pailles**

Dr The Hon. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources

Mr S. Ragen, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Science and Research

Mr C. Nayna, Chairman, MFDC  
Mr Issa Asgarally, Chairman of the Jury

Mrs Kamla Ramyeed

Board Members

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon and welcome. It gives me great pleasure to be with you on the occasion of the remittance of cheques to the selected 10 best scriptwriters in the context of the second edition of the Annual Mauritian Short Film Competition 2009.

Allow me to extend my sincere thanks to my colleague Hon. Vasant Kumar Bunwaree, Minister of Education, Culture and Human Resources for his presence amongst us today and also for his support to this project.

## **Competition**

This competition as you all know together with the “The First Mobile Phone Film Competition” was launched on Thursday 20 August 2009. At the outset I am pleased to note that this year’s competition is a success. The MFDC has registered 117 Scripts compared to only 43 last year which is a clear indication of the great interest among our local producer and scriptwriters.

For the “The First Mobile Phone Film Competition” MFDC has received 12 and 7 mobile films for Category A (12-15 years) and Category B (16-18 years) respectively

In my address at the launching ceremony I indicated that the two competitions being launched, forms part of the overall strategy of Government -

- (a) To diversify and modernize our economy by developing new pillars;
- (b) To tap new sources of investment; and
- (c) To create new opportunities for employment to promote creativity and innovation.

Government’s aim is to transform our economy into a knowledge based economy, a digital economy. After the Cabinet reshuffle in September, this overall strategy is being pursued and new avenues being explored. Mauritius is a land of diversity par excellence and the

ideal breeding ground for creativity and innovation and the nurturing of local talents. And the Film Industry is an ideal platform for our local artists. Let us not forget that this is a sector for the future with huge scope for employment generation.

In countries like USA and India, Film Making is emerging as a billion dollar industry for the future. We may not be able to aspire to the same status and Hollywood or Bollywood but certainly we can aspire to establish a niche for a local vibrant Film Industry.

MFDC is one of the vehicles for the development of local artistic talents. It comes under my Ministry's responsibility and its mission is to develop a local film industry – Une Industrie du Cinema.

MFDC was created in 1986. We must admit that we are still a very long way from achieving its mission. The mission remains the same, but we need to review our strategies. My Ministry believes that MFDC has a bright future and has huge potentials.

### **Local Film Industry**

With the combination of talents, technology, creativity and innovation, we can create a vibrant local film industry. This is our ambition and we have already taken a few important steps in this direction:-

1. Launching of Professional Training for our artists;
2. A Short Film Festival;
3. A Children Film Festival; and
4. Meeting with local stakeholders of the film world

The Annual Mauritian Short Film Competition 2009 was yet another opportunity for us to discover new talents, skills and creativity of our local filmmakers and potential ones.

Following a workshop I had with the filmmakers on 23 July 2009 and as per their valuable inputs and feedback, we decided to make the competition open by not restricting it to any particular theme or context. This will indeed enable our participants to think more globally and develop a broader sense of creativity and imagination.

Unlike the precedent year whereby only 5 best scripts were selected for production to the tune of Rs 100,000 each, this year we have selected 10 best scripts and Rs 150,000 will be allocated for production of each of the 10 films.

This has been possible, Ladies and Gentlemen, due to the financial support and personal commitment of my colleague minister Hon. Dr Vasant Bunwaree who has kindly put at our disposal, through the

Human Resource Development, Knowledge and Arts Fund of his Ministry a fund of Rs 2.2 million for this year's competition.

This once again shows that we have at heart the development of the industry and no stone is left unturned to go forward to consolidate the film making industry. It also clearly demonstrates the vision of this Government to develop the film industry in Mauritius and I can tell you that I will always support any programmes and initiatives of MFDC that fall within the ambit of my Ministry.

Ladies and Gentlemen, let us all hope that with this annual event, it can sail the film business to new height of success, pushing it off our coast into deeper waters, reaching new horizons and disseminating a new culture of filmmaking.

The second competition that is the 'First Mobile Phone Film Competition' has received fewer entries.

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The whole idea of such competition is that since the last few years, the development in mobile phone technology has been astounding. Since the addition of video and camera features, the mobile phone has become a creative tool for filmmakers and visual artists alike.

Therefore, if we are to achieve a culture of inclusiveness that empowers all human beings and provide for opportunities to blossom we must begin with young people. The creativity and talent of our youth should find expression in a constructive, healthy and positive manner. This is the reason why the MFDC is organizing this mobile phone film competition. Visual images are powerful means for young children to participate in and make sense of their world.

It is hoped that the idea of a mobile phone as a new creative tool will attract more participants for the second edition.

I am reiterating my wish that at the end of this competition the MFDC will organize a mini film festival to showcase these productions around the country and to negotiate with Mauritius Telecom for the broadcast of the films through Video on Demand (VOD).

### **New Legislation**

In line with Government Programme, a new legislation has been prepared. It aims to give a new boost to the cinematography industry.

As you are aware there is a Memorandum of Association between the MFDC and the MBC. Discussions will be held to expand the scope of the existing collaboration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding, allow me to say a special thanks to the members of the jury for their excellent work. Being given the number of entries received for this edition it is for sure that the selection process has been very tight and coming out with the 10 best scripts has not been an easy job.

I would like to congratulate the winners! Unfortunately, only 10 out of the 117 have been retained for the sake of this competition. This does not mean that those who have not seen their scripts selected should be discouraged. On the other hand, I would encourage them to persevere and improve upon so that next year you have the chance to be selected.

Ladies and Gentlemen, today is the only first part of the Competition. The challenge now is to translate the vision, idea and story into film. This will involve altogether another set of qualities that our winners of today need to possess in order to produce a film which is up to expectation. In other words, you will be responsible for successfully creatively translating the written script into actual images and sounds on the screen.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am one of those who believe and advocate that competition is in fact essential if anyone wants to attain excellence. I also believe that Mauritius has a reservoir of talents and potentialities that need to be fully exploited for the benefit of the film industry. I leave it to you now to showcase these talents through your films. LA BALLE EST MAINTENANT DANS VOTRE CAMP.

Thank for your kind attention.