

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE A.K. GUNGAH, MINISTER OF CIVIL SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS ON THE OCCASION OF THE AWARD OF CERTIFICATES TO SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES OF THE AWARD COURSES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, MAURITIUS ON MONDAY 11 OCTOBER 2010 AT 13 30 HOURS.

Mr Fokeer, Director General University of Technology,

Mauritius

Mr Seebaluck, Senior Chief Executive of my Ministry

Mrs Oree, Ag. Permanent Secretary of my Ministry

Dr. Babooa, Registrar, University of Technology, Mauritius

Dr. Chittoo, Head of School, School of Business, Management and Finance

Officers of my Ministry and staff of the UTM

Resource Persons

Representatives of Trade Unions

Awardees

Members of the Press

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Afternoon to everybody.

Today is the day for officers to receive their awards. Today is the day of reward for your efforts. Today is the day of celebrations.

I feel an immense pleasure to be in your midst this afternoon to share the joy and happiness of this long awaited moment after your successful completion of the award courses. Let me first of all congratulate you heartily on your success in the Award Courses. This ceremony marks the culmination of your hard work, efforts, energy and sacrifice you have put in your studies during a semester at the University of Technology, inspite of your numerous personal and professional obligations.

Ladies and Gentlemen, needless for me to tell you that financial resources are very scarce these days. Nonetheless, my Ministry is sparing no effort to make optimal use of whatever resources we have at our disposal to ensure that we do not compromise when it comes to reduce on capacity building which is crucial for the advancement of the Civil Service. I am devoting personal attention to the reforms programme including training and

development. I want to ensure that my Ministry invests adequate resources to training of public officers because I firmly believe in the paramount importance of training and capacity building, especially at the present juncture when many countries, both developed and developing, are facing numerous complex challenges.

We are living in an age of expanding opportunity in which rapid technological advances are changing our world at a speed and scale not witnessed since the industrial revolution. Today we are living in the Information Age which has changed completely the business environment and landscape. There is no room for complacency or business as usual. We need to actively maintain our competitive edge by anticipating future development in the wake of unprecedented changes. The knowledge base is constantly changing. What is leading edge today becomes conventional in some years. To keep pace with the changing knowledge base, Alvin Toffler had advocated that “People have to learn, unlearn and relearn their trades or jobs.” These are the main reasons that have pushed training and capacity building

high on the agenda of most organizations, both in the public and private sectors.

What Toffler wants to share is that we all have learned our job. But after sometime we have to unlearn what we learned sometime back, especially those habits, skills and ways of doing our work that have become outdated and obsolete in the wake of emerging trends and technological development. We have to learn the new methods, techniques and skills that will improve the ways of doing business.

I do know the Civil Service and it does amazing things. It is an undeniable fact that the Public Service in Mauritius has played a crucial role in the modernization of our country and in promoting and implementing the development goals of the Government. We have already a smart Civil Service. I want to reiterate my vision to build a **smarter Civil Service**, a **smarter Civil Service** which exudes **passion, pride, pace** and **professionalism**. However, the task to build a smarter Civil Service does not rest only with me as Minister or the Government. It is also the

responsibility of all stakeholders, including the members of the public and the Unions, and most importantly the individual public officers. We need to put our hands, hearts and minds together to achieve this cherished goal.

As you are aware, there are quite a number of reforms initiatives which are currently underway in the Civil Service. Among these reforms, we have two major reforms which are very important for effective and efficient management of resources in a modern Civil Service. These are the Performance Management System and the Programme Based Budgeting. These two reforms are geared towards better utilization of our human resources and obtaining value for every rupee of the tax payers' money we spend to provide services. Performance at work will be assessed and monitored in accordance with targets set in the Programme Based Budgeting of each Ministry/Department. Hence the overall objective of these reforms is to achieve and promote efficiency gains. Subsequently, pay rise, rewards and other pecuniary benefits will be performance-related. Therefore, it is imperative that we start revisiting our ways of doing business now.

In today's world, pride in performance has taken by the wayside because it requires effort and hard work. Nothing happens unless it is made to happen. When one is discouraged, it is easy to look for shortcuts. However these should be avoided no matter how great the temptation. Pride comes from within. The quality of the work and the quality of the worker are inseparable. You must always look at the global picture. Here I would like to share with you an anecdote which goes as follows:

- Three people were laying bricks and a passer-by asked them what they were doing.
- The first one replied, "Don't you see I am making a living?"
- The second one said, "Don't you see I am laying bricks?"
- The third one said, "I am building a beautiful monument."

Three people doing the same work gave totally different replies. The question is: "Did they have different attitudes? And would their attitude affect their performance?" The answer is a clear 'yes'. Excellence comes when the performer takes pride in doing

his best. Every job is a self-portrait of the person who does it, regardless of what the job is. So my appeal to you is that the additional knowledge and skills you have acquired during the award courses should be used effectively to enhance performance and productivity at your respective workplace. I invite you to look at your job not only as a brick layer or as an income-earner, but as builder of a beautiful monument.

I reiterate my sincere congratulations to you awardees. I extend my warmest thanks to the UTM, the Resource persons and all the staff members who have helped towards the successful organization and completion of this course.

My earnest appeal to you, Awardees, is that your learning should not stop here. We have only put you on the track of continuous and lifelong learning. I will strongly encourage you to continue on this path for further self development and for a brighter career.

With these words, **ladies and gentlemen**, I thank you for your attention.