

Official Opening of the Engineering Career-Oriented Fair 2011

Prof Morgan, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Mauritius

Deans and Heads of Department of the University

President of the Student Union

President of Engineering Society of the University

Participating Employers

Sponsors and exhibitors

Dear Students

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good morning.

It is a pleasure for me to be here this morning to join you at the Official Opening of the Engineering Career-Oriented Fair 2011.

The Engineering Career-Oriented Fair 2011 is a platform for University of Mauritius students to plan their future careers, and I hope students will take opportunity of this Career Fair to reach out and communicate with major players of their respective industries.

I pleased to see the large number of companies participating in this year's Career Fair, and I thank you all for coming to the University of Mauritius and giving career opportunities and guidance to our final year students.

Dear Students,

Today is a unique opportunity to form partnerships between potential employers and employees. Entering work life after completing studies is a two way process. As students, you need to make yourselves attractive to employers. But companies have to make an equal effort to attract the best students. Career fairs are great avenues for students to mingle with employers, learn more about their chosen industry and the culture of participating organisations.

Together with students in higher education all around the country, you represent the real value, the most precious resource in Mauritius today.

The success factor for Mauritius many years ahead is young, educated people that are prepared to take positions that form building bricks in a sustainable future. A prosperous future for Mauritius is based on innovation and research - in all the fields of engineering – just to mention these.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Businesses today have to be bold and brave. When looking for the right people, they must dare pursuing one of the most precious competitive assets in our global world because they already have highly educated people with the right

competence as part of their own background. I strongly recommend students to take this opportunity and visit the stands. For some, this could be a life-changing day.

This time last year, the mood was a somber one. The global financial system was in turmoil. Mauritius also experienced the effects of the global recession. For the graduating class of 2009, the immediate future then appeared fraught with difficulty. This time last year, the Government launched several schemes to help our businesses to ride out the storm. Today, the worst seems to be over, and Mauritius' economy is growing again.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that there are positive and welcoming signs today for our economy to grow even more. I think our students have reasons to be optimistic. As they set out in their career search, they must be resourceful and boldly seek opportunities, but at the same time, I urge them not to take the opportunities for granted. The global economic recovery is still fragile and many uncertainties remain.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is no better time for the career fair to take place than now. The economy is strong and the job market is vibrant. This is reflected in the strong participation of

employers and exhibitors at this Career Fair 2011. These partners will also be conducting talks during the fair to inform students of the latest emerging trends within their respective industries and the exciting career opportunities that await them. I am sure that our students can consider themselves fortunate to have access to such a wide variety of career options and prospects but they will also have to function effectively at a global level, have initiative and resilience, and also be able to navigate well around unpredictable situations.

As you are aware Government has the vision to transform Mauritius into a Centre of Excellence in Higher Education in the region and to make Mauritius a regional hub for tertiary education. My Ministry is well embarked into different programmes so as to realize this vision. Some of these are -

- The setting up of new “Campus Universitaires” in different parts of the country;
- The extension of the 24/7 concept to tertiary education in order to create a culture of higher learning in the country;
- Government will strive to reach an objective of one graduate per family. In so doing we want to achieve the development of a skilled, versatile and competent workforce and promote social mobility;
- A One-Stop-Shop for Tertiary Education has already been launched at first floor of Cyber Tower I in Ebène so as to facilitate access to information on facilities and tertiary courses available in Mauritius. This initiative is also a step towards attracting foreign students to Mauritius;

- Novel schemes have already been launched for awards and research grants to young scientists who would wish to pursue research in scientific fields of relevance to the local economy;
- Incentives are being provided for tertiary education institutions to come up with programmes in new emerging areas such as nanotechnology, renewable energy, marine sciences and life sciences which may be developed at a later stage as new pillars of the Mauritian economy;
- We are promoting a new culture of Open and Distance Learning, through the setting up of the Open University and its development to include provision of courses in key areas of the economy.

To our students who are here with us today, I urge you to make full use of the many programmes and schemes available, and seize the opportunity to venture and decide on their future.

In closing, I wish you all a fruitful time at the Career Fair 2011 and with these words, I declare the Career Fair 2011 officially open.

Thank you.