

**Speech of Honourable Deepak Balgobin
Minister of Information Technology,
Communication and Innovation**

**Secure 5G and Emerging Technologies
Workshop**

**Organized by the United States Department of Commerce
Commercial Law Development Program**

**Funded by the United States Department of State Digital
Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership**

**Le Meridien Ile Maurice, Pointe aux
Piments**

25th June 2024 at 09.15am

- **His Excellency, Henry Jardine, U.S. Ambassador to Mauritius**
- **Mr. Doonunjoy Dassaye, Permanent Secretary of My Ministry,**
- **Mr. Satrajit Sardar, Deputy Chief of Mission to the U.S. Embassy in Mauritius**
- **Mr Kapil Reesaul, Chief Executive Officer, Mauritius Telecom**
- **Officers of my Ministry**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**
- **All Protocol observed**

Good morning to you all.

It is with great honour and a deep sense of responsibility that I address you today at this critical crossroad in our country's technological evolution.

We find ourselves at a transformative moment, where the confluence of Emerging Technologies presents not just unprecedented opportunities, but a mandate for visionary leadership and decisive action.

The convergence of these advanced technologies is set to redefine the landscape of growth, innovation, and development across every sector of our country.

By leveraging on the potential of 5G and Emerging Technologies, our objective is to propel Mauritius into a new era of digital transformation,

ensuring that we remain at the forefront of technological advancement in the Indian Ocean region and beyond.

This strategic initiative is not merely about technological adoption.

It is about laying the foundation for a future where digital innovation drives economic prosperity, enhances public services, and creates a more connected and equitable society for all our citizens.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mauritius has always been a pioneer in innovation in the region.

Hailed recently by Oxford Insights as first in sub-Saharan Africa for AI readiness, we are not stopping there.

The Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council is now actively working on the National AI Policy.

Our strategic investments in ICT infrastructure, coupled with our commitment to fostering a knowledge-based economy, have laid a strong foundation for our digital future.

We have made significant strides in expanding broadband access, enhancing digital literacy, and supporting the growth of our tech ecosystem.

Emerging technologies are redesigning industries worldwide.

In Mauritius, we are committed to embracing these innovations to

- enhance public services,
- optimize business processes,
- and create new opportunities for our citizens.

As highlighted in the latest budget, our strategic adoption of AI is paving the way for a more efficient and interconnected society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All these technologies rely fundamentally on robust, high-speed connectivity.

This is why 5G is such a crucial component of our technological landscape.

Being one of the most revolutionary technologies on the horizon, 5G promises to deliver ultra-fast, low latency and massive connectivity.

For Mauritius, the implementation of 5G is already a game-changer.

It has already been deployed in several locations.

Now this will be involved country wide, enabling

- the development of smart cities,
- supporting the growth of our digital economy,
- and enhancing the overall quality of life for our citizens.

From remote healthcare services to advanced manufacturing and autonomous transportation, I am certain that in the near future, 5G will drive innovation across all sectors.

The Government is committed to creating an enabling environment for 5G and emerging technologies to flourish.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Investing in digital skills training programs, especially in AI, will equip our workforce with the knowledge and expertise required to thrive in a technology-driven economy.

Another recent budget announcement makes provision for training courses involving AI which will now be eligible for a 90% refund.

This concretely demonstrate the Government's commitment to developing a high-tech skilled labour force for the future.

To achieve this vision, it requires collaboration and partnerships.

My Ministry is actively engaging with industry stakeholders, academic institutions, and international partners to drive forward our ICT agenda.

By fostering an ecosystem of innovation and cooperation, we can accelerate our progress and position of Mauritius as a regional leader in digital transformation.

I encourage each one of you - to join us - on this journey, to share your expertise, and to help in shaping a digital Mauritius that we can all be proud of.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to extend my gratitude to our esteemed friends from the United States for their commitment to supporting Mauritius in our journey towards technological advancement and innovation.

Your dedication and collaborative spirit are invaluable to us as we navigate the complexities of this digital era.

Today's workshop stands as a testament to the potential of international cooperation.

It exemplifies the kind of partnership that is essential for fostering innovation and driving progress.

By bringing together diverse minds and expertise, we can share knowledge, exchange ideas and develop solutions that will benefit not only our respective countries but also the global community.

Our collaboration with the United States has already yielded significant advancements, and I am confident that this workshop will further solidify our shared goals.

I wish you all a fruitful and engaging workshop, filled with insightful dialogues and ideas.

Together, let us continue to push the boundaries of innovation and achieve new heights of excellence.

Thank you for your attention.