Speech of Hon. Deepak Balgobin, Minister of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation

Launching of the National GIS Platform

Flacq District Council
Tuesday, 20th December 2022 at 14hrs

- **Mr Ravi Jugoo, Chairperson of the District Council of Flacq,**

- **Chairpersons and Mayors,**

- **District Councilors,**

- **Chief Executives of Municipal and District Councils,**

- **Officers of Ministries and Departments,**

- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good afternoon to you all.

I am delighted to be present for the launch of the National GIS Platform. We all know, that this launch could not come at a better time. As we emerge from the pandemic, innovation is key for the success of our digital agenda. And most importantly, it demonstrates the innovative potential of our institutions.

In August 2018, the Honourable Prime Minister, Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, launched the I-Council project. Since then, my Ministry, in collaboration with the Moka Disctrict Council and other local authorities, has been investing enormous efforts in gathering the required inputs from multiple sources and coordinating the various activities of the different stakeholders.

The I-Council project has now graduated to the next level where its constituting elements:

1. the Council Project Management software, and

2. the GIS platform,

have scaled up to become the e-National Project Management software and the National GIS Platform respectively. Today indeed marks a milestone with the official launch.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important to highlight that these digital initiatives have been made possible thanks to the digital enablers that have been put in place by my Ministry. Many more flagship projects are yet to come and join the fleet of solutions that are building our digital island we are longing to see.

So, what are those digital enablers on which reside solutions like the National GIS platform and the e-National Project Management software?

Connectivity is the number one enabler that permits a seamless operation of these platforms. Government is continuously enhancing connectivity both at local and international level. 5G networks are currently being deployed

across the island and a fourth submarine cable is planned to be launched in 2023.

The InfoHighway interoperability framework is being leveraged for the exchange of information between various public agencies for the successful operationalisation of these new platforms.

Other enabling platforms include:

- the MoKloud digital safe for the safekeeping of official documents of citizens in digital format for real-time verification and online sharing of documents like proofs of address and other supporting statutory documents with local authorities, for instance, and

- the MauPass digital identity system which can be integrated as a single window authentication service into online applications, including the National GIS platform and the e-National Project Management software, for securing online transactions with Government.

- The Mausign certification authority has also been set up by my Ministry to further reinforce the trust of transacting in our digital ecosystem. MauSign digital certificates can be issued to citizens and corporates transacting on Government platforms like the National GIS platform and the e-National Project Management software.

- The MoRendezVous app is another application that I love to mention during my official interventions. This app has been extensively exploited to manage queues efficiently at counters. Applicants may book an appointment at a specific time and avail of their waiting time to attend to other businesses. The MoRendezVous services may be integrated in the National GIS platform and the e-National Project Management software system to optimise usage of applicants' time.

I wish to urge local authorities and other Government agencies to avail of all the digital facilities to pursue on the digitalisation agenda so as to ease the lives of our citizens and businesses, and open the way for a smart Mauritius.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The key to the success of our society's well-being lies in the hands of our youths. Recognising this fact, Government is laying the necessary foundations. One of the main pillars for a better Mauritius is skills development especially in digital technology.

In this respect, our Higher Education Institutions are putting in place the necessary digital courses for our youths to be fully equipped to join the workforce of our dynamic industry. My Ministry has also set up the Mauritius

Emerging Technology Council as a watchdog to adapt the curriculums of our schools and universities to the requirements of industry in terms of new and emerging technologies.

Furthermore, as the COVID-19 aftermath has taught us, we are encouraging businesses and government services to go digital for the easing the lives of our citizens and businesses. The National GIS project is a new initiative that is aligned with the philosophy of providing services in digital mode for the well-being of our Mauritian society.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The e-National Project Management software provides for the comprehensive administration of institutions.

For the local authorities, the e-National Project Management software is operated across all departments covering the management of council projects from conception through procurement, approval of committees, awarding of contracts, following up of projects, job scheduling, budget monitoring to payment processes.

On the other hand, the National GIS platform, put in place by the National Computer Board, which operates under the aegis of my Ministry, provides

for tagging of assets of district councils, municipalities, the Land Drainage Authority, and the Road Development Authority.

Other institutions and authorities can be added to the system and their respective assets tagged in the future. The assets include roads, drains, poles, buildings, sports complexes and others, which can be viewed as different mapping layers.

Reports, complaints and proposals can be uploaded in the system for the relevant authorities to take actions on tagged items or provide a response to queries. Updates on the status of assets from the e-National Project Management system are fed into the National GIS system, when available.

The e-National Project Management software can potentially be interfaced with other platforms like the National e-Licensing System (NeLS) of the Economic Development Board and the Citizen Support Unit of the Prime Minister's Office to provide for a fully integrated system for public infrastructure administration.

These platforms have been implemented in 6 Local Authorities and will be deployed in the other local authorities by March 2023.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to express my gratitude to all stakeholders who have contributed to the success of the National GIS platform and the e-National Project Management software, namely:

- the Ministry of Local Government and Disaster Risk Management,

- all District Councils particularly the Flacq District Council, the Moka District Council and the Savanne District Council,

- the Land Drainage Authority,

- the Traffic Management and Road Safety Unit,

- the National Computer Board,

- the Central Informatics Bureau,

- IT Security Unit,

- and the staff of my Ministry.

I would like to place on record the relentless efforts of the National Computer Board and the officers of Moka and Flacq District Councils in developing those a cutting-edge platform.

On this note, I thank you for your kind attention.