

**Africa Day organised by Brahma Kumaris (Mauritius) on Friday 26 May
2023 at 12:00 at the City Council of Port Louis**

The Lord Mayor, City Council of Port Louis (Not Confirmed yet)

The ECOSOCC Representative ????

**Mr THOMAS Oliver, Chairperson- Nelson Mandela Centre
for African Culture Trust Fund**

Sister Gaitree, Chairperson Brahma Kumaris- Mauritius

Ladies and gentlemen

Good morning

It gives me great pleasure to be with you this morning to celebrate Africa Day upon the invitation of the Brahma Kumaris.

Each year, 25 May is celebrated as Africa Day, commemorating the ongoing quest for unity as well as the political and economic liberation of African people.

Africa Day celebrates African diversity and success, and highlights the cultural and economic potential that exists on the African continent. It also serves to raise awareness and understanding of development issues in Africa.

Ladies and gentlemen

Africa is on the rebound. After a few years of sluggish growth, most of the region's economies are returning to previous levels of expansion. Today, seven of the 10 fastest-growing economies in the world are in Africa and the Continent is increasingly moving more into the global limelight as a promising investment destination – despite preconceived risks of investing in turbulent times.

A significant amount of the growth that is being experienced and enjoyed in key markets across Africa is a direct result of governments being able to successfully implement far-reaching economic and political reforms, thus creating more conducive business and investment climates.

“**Agenda 2063**” of the African Union is an approach which encourages African states to learn effectively from lessons of the past, build on current progress and strategically exploit all possible opportunities available, to ensure positive socioeconomic transformation within the next 40 years. Much work needs to be done if we are to meet this challenge.

The African Union has conceded that in order for Africa to succeed, Africa must do things very differently!

The theme of this year’s celebrations of Africa Day is “**Africa – opportunities in challenging times**”.

Indeed, **Ladies and gentlemen**, Africa is a continent marked by challenges and opportunities.

It has a young and entrepreneurial population, a wealth of natural resources of which the rest of the world cannot do without, rapid urbanisation, dynamic economies, and a supportive diaspora.

African countries are evolving into hotspots for outsourcing services. Regional clusters in Africa are fast becoming preferred destinations for technology, business, and knowledge management outsourcing.

Bolstered by the African Continental Free Trade Agreement, policies to encourage innovation and integration can propel the Continent into new frontiers of business and human development.

Unfortunately, while many African countries have been enjoying notable social and economic progress, the gains made in this realm have, in some cases, not cascaded down to alleviate everyday problems such as improved healthcare systems and the creation of the much needed jobs from Africa's youths.

Furthermore, climate change threatens to reverse the hard-fought-for gains of recent decade.

Indeed, Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change - induced natural disasters such as cyclones, droughts and floods. Since 1990, droughts and floods have respectively lowered African countries' GDP by 0.7 percent and 0.4 percent.

Talking about cyclone, I am saddened by the loss of life, destruction of property and displacement of people due to flash floods and landslides in some African countries as a result of the recent cyclone. I would like to extend my deep sympathies to the people and the Governments of these countries

Ladies and gentlemen

While concluding, I must express my heartfelt gratitude to the Brahma Kumaris for their remarkable initiative in organising this special event.

The Brahma Kumaris have long been at the forefront of promoting peace, harmony, and spiritual growth in our society. Their tireless dedication to nurturing

the values of love, tolerance, and understanding has played a significant role in strengthening the fabric of our multicultural nation.

Sub-Saharan Africa has come a long way in a short time, and there is every reason to believe that it can continue growing and developing with the appropriate policy response.

Africa is the future

Thank you