

**Opening ceremony of Mauritius Emerging Technologies Exhibition METX
2024 on Thursday 9 May 2024 at SVICC at 13:30 hrs**

Ladies and gentlemen

All protocols observed

Good afternoon

It is a pleasure for me to be in your midst for this Mauritius Emerging Technologies Exhibition.

We are living in an era of unrelenting digital disruption where emerging technologies have become an important factor in starting, growing and expanding businesses across all industries

We are in a generation where technology has surrounded us from all sides.

The evolution of technology has made it possible to achieve lots in less time. Technology has given tools and machines to be used to solve problems around the world. There has been a complete transformation in the way we do things because of contributions from scientific technology.

The relationship between humans and technology has continued for ages and has given rise to many innovations. It has made it easier for us to handle our daily chores starting from home, office, schools and domestic needs. It has made available basic necessities and safer living spaces. We can sit at home comfortably and make transactions through the use of online banking. Online shopping, video calling, and

attending video lectures on the phone have all been possible due to the invention of the internet.

We must recognise that the pace of technological development is accelerating at an unprecedented rate. Just a few decades ago, it would have been unimaginable that we would have access to the kind of technology that we have today. We can now communicate with people all over the world instantly, access vast amounts of information at our fingertips, and automate tasks that would have been impossible to do manually just a few years ago.

This rapid pace of technological development is having a profound impact on our lives. It is changing the way we work, the way we learn, and the way we interact with the world around us. It is also creating new opportunities and challenges.

The key to successfully navigating the rapid pace of technological development is to be open to change and to be willing to learn new things. We need to be prepared to adapt to new technologies and to use them to our advantage.

If we can do this, the rapid pace of technological development can be a force for good in the world. It can help us to solve some of the world's biggest problems and to create a better future for all.

Ladies and gentlemen

Emerging technologies can have a profound impact on our economy, our society, and our way of life. They can create new jobs, new industries, and new opportunities. But they can also displace workers, disrupt businesses, and create new challenges.

It is important to be prepared for the impact of new technologies. We need to invest in education and training so that our workforce can adapt to the changing demands of the economy.

We need to stay current with emerging technologies and latest technology trends. In this context, I must comment the Ministry of Information Technology, Communication and Innovation for organising this Exhibition which will showcase the latest and most innovative emerging technologies.

This exhibition provides a platform for leading technology companies and organisations to demonstrate their cutting- edge products and solutions, fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing among global leaders, decision makers, policy makers and industry professionals.

The Prime Minister, Honourable Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, had pledged to the nation that he would transform the economy into “**an economy in the league of high-income countries, driven by technology and innovation and bringing higher levels of growth, equality and share prosperity**”, as spelt out in the Government programme 2020-24.

Government will further invest in and promote cutting edge technologies including Artificial Intelligence, robotics, blockchain and internet of things, as our country embraces the dictates of the fourth industrial revolution.

The setting up of the Mauritius Emerging Technologies Council in 2021 is a step forward. This Council acts as a major driver and a platform to promote innovation

through the application of emerging technologies, such as Artificial Intelligence, Nanotechnology and Health Technologies for the future of Mauritius.

The Council aims to promote and support the development and adoption of Emerging Technologies for the benefit of the Mauritian economy and society, ensuring a sustainable and inclusive future for all.

Ladies and gentlemen

I understand that this exhibition of Emerging Technologies follows the Artificial Intelligence Summit which was opened yesterday. It is a premier global event dedicated to exploring the latest advancements and innovations in artificial intelligence (AI) technology.

No doubt, AI has unlocked the doors to an infinite realm of possibilities, giving machines the power to create, innovate and mimic human behaviour with startling accuracy

We must welcome this national effort and dedication on AI and I believe that this event is an excellent opportunity to advance regional and global efforts to ensure further discussions on the ethical governance of AI.

Participants to the summit include business leaders, academics, researchers, policymakers, and technology enthusiasts, coming from at least 8 countries.

I am convinced that the Summit has provided invaluable insights, strategies, and networking opportunities to stay ahead in today's rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Ladies and gentlemen

This is a moment of profound opportunity. The benefits of AI are immense. It could give us the power to fight the climate crisis, make medical and scientific breakthroughs, explore our universe, and improve everyday life for people around the world.

So, let us seize this moment. Let us recognize this moment we are in.

As leaders from government, civil society, and the private sector, let us work together to build a future where AI creates opportunity, advances equity, fundamental freedoms and rights being protected.

I shall conclude by congratulating the organisers of this Exhibition on Emerging Technologies which I am sure will attract many visitors.