

Launching Ceremony of the Training Institution of the Integrated and Sustainable Development Ltd on Friday 27 October 2023 at 15:00 hrs

Mr. Atmaramsingh, Chairman ISD

Your Worship Mr. Mike Mungar, Mayor Municipality of Vacoas-Phoenix

Mr. Samy Chellen, Deputy Mayor of Municipality of Curepipe

Mr. Mardayah Kona Yerukunondu, First Deputy Governor Bank of Mauritius

Mrs. Brinda Thanacody, Director M.E.S

Mr. Kresh Seebundhun, Director Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance

Mr. Pradeep Jagutpal, Director ISD

All protocol observed

Ladies and gentlemen

Good afternoon

Thank you for the invitation to join you at the launch of the **Training Institution of the Integrated and Sustainable Development Ltd.**

As demand for quality higher education in Africa rises, the term “higher education hub” has been thrown around, looking for takers across the continent. Mauritius is, for many, the front-runner.

Education is already a top government priority in Mauritius, and the island ranks high in UNESCO’s list of African countries for tertiary education enrolment. Add to that, its geographical and the island’s cultural and historical ties to Asia and Europe, Mauritius seems the obvious choice to play host to a new brand of global, affordable, world-class higher education for the continent.

As a matter of fact, Government's aim is to transform Mauritius into an international higher-education hub catering for the needs of the region, especially those of Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and Asia.

Leveraging its tradition of excellence, stability and pleasant living environment, Mauritius holds the trump card to become the new regional hub for world-class education services.

The island has already a growing number of leading international institutions offering an array of programmes in various fields of study. With key factors such as competitive costs of education, streamlined procedures and a part-time work scheme, an increasing number of foreign students are now choosing Mauritius to pursue higher education studies here in two of the most important languages in the world: English and French.

Already, institutions like Middlesex University, Curtin University of South Africa, the University of Aberystwyth (Wales), and the University of Wolverhampton of the UK have set up Mauritian branch campuses. More recently, Médine Education Village, a project backed by Médine Group, has created a space for European institutions to set up in Mauritius.

A few statistics: Tertiary level enrolment increased from 49,497 in 2021 to 50,566 students in 2022 and the Gross Enrolment Ratio works out to 49.5%.

Last year there were 27,642 students enrolled in our publicly funded tertiary institution while the enrolment in private higher education institutions stood at 15,182.

The Higher Education sector welcomes now a new institution - the **Training Institution of the Integrated and Sustainable Development Ltd**, which is being launched today.

This Institution aims at providing education to young professionals in Mauritius, Africa, and the Indian Ocean in a holistic manner and enabling them to make positive contributions to the creation of integrated and sustainable enterprises.

Ladies and gentlemen

Our institutions of higher learning must gear up for facing challenges of a knowledge-based and technology-driven world. It will be nations with high quality human resources, which will be counted amongst the front ranking nations of the world in the knowledge era.

Education has a fundamental role to play in creating responsible, innovative and analytical citizens. I believe that as the youth acquire skills, they should also be made sensitive to the qualities of the head as well as of the heart.

As Nobel Laureate Rabindranath Tagore said, "**The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.**" Our universities and training centres, therefore, should be symbols of learning, humanism, tolerance and balanced reasoning.

Degrees and credentials are important, but the development of soft skills is a crucial part of fostering a dynamic workforce.

Companies seek candidates with both types of skills, hard and soft, when hiring for most positions. That is because if you have a negative attitude and cannot get along with others, or you don't communicate well, you don't work well as part of a team, it will not matter how well educated and qualified you are – chances are you won't be successful in your career and life in general.

Key soft skills include communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and adaptability. Good communication helps in expressing thoughts clearly. Teamwork promotes collaboration. Problem-solving allows us to find solutions, while adaptability helps us cope with change.

It is noteworthy that the courses that will be offered by the Training Institution of the Integrated and Sustainable Development Ltd will include Soft skills training such as Peak Performance, Stress Management, Ethical Leadership and Communication

What will truly determine students' choice of a higher education destination remains quality. And while partnering with some of the big names on the international academic scene certainly adds value to programs, the tangible mark of quality that students aspire to is employability.

Even more than having the fancy degree from the world-reputed university, students will tend to choose the programs with strong links to industry and entrepreneurial opportunity — those which make them the most attractive and

useful on the job market. And this is the direction in which Mauritius, as a potential higher education hub, must now start gearing itself.

Ladies and gentlemen, the future of Mauritius depends to some extent on the quality of our graduates.

On that note I would like to wish **the Integrated and Sustainable Development Ltd** every success in its efforts to nurture future professionals and leaders with an international mindset and a world vision.

Thank you for your attention