

WELCOME REMARKS BY Mr. ASSEFA SHIFA, CEO

APRM SECRETARIAT

Domaine Les Pailles, Mauritius

23 April 2012-04-22

Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dr. Arvin Boolell,

Dr. Mekideche, Lead Panel Member for Mauritius

Ambassador Patrice Cure, APRM Focal Point for Mauritius

Distinguished Participants,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me and the staff from the APR Secretariat which are accompanying me, to be here in Mauritius for this important workshop on “Harmonising the Mauritius National Plan of Action (NPoA) with the existing development strategies and Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF)”. Allow me Honorable Minister to extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation for the generous hospitality your government and the people of Mauritius have accorded us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Port Louis.

My thanks also go to APRM Strategic partners, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) for their continued partnership with us, and especially convening this important meeting in collaboration with the Government of Mauritius.

Let me also take this opportunity to salute all other stakeholders, including government ministries, departments and agencies, civil society and the private sector, who have shown keen interests in this uniquely African initiative and continue to demonstrate their commitment to the ideals of the APRM through their

active participation and involvement in the APRM activities. I also recognise the presence of representatives from Uganda, who have come to share experiences in the spirit of African brother and sisterhood. The Secretariat greatly values such collaboration and partnerships and looks forward to strengthening them further to higher heights.

Honourable Minister,

Distinguished Participants,

The benefits of undertaking the APRM process cannot be overemphasised: it amongst others deepens democracy by strengthening participation of a wide range of stakeholders in governance debates, it brings to the fore problems that might have been neglected or overseen and contributes to building national consensus and political trust.

The National Programme of Action (NPOA) that results out of this exercise is a social contract that seeks to address governance and policy challenges identified by stakeholders. The primary purpose of the NPOA is thus to guide and mobilize the country's efforts in implementing its national priorities.

More significantly, as an agent of change and not an end in itself, the biggest challenge for the APRM has been for countries to be able to muster the resources and capacity, required to implement the national programmes of action. As the completed reviews have shown, the end of the review process should mark the beginning of efforts required to face up squarely the challenges of the

implementation of their programmes of action. To this end, necessary coordination within government ministries and partnerships with non state stakeholders, namely: civil society and private sector are critical to the success of the Mechanism.

The theme for this event tasks us with the responsibility of examining how the APRM National Plan of Action can be integrated within the broader national development strategies and plans in Mauritius while making pertinent recommendations geared towards ensuring its effective implementation. The NPOA is neither a parallel development strategy nor a substitute for other existing national development plans. It rather compliments and sharpens the government programs. In this regard, it is important that government ministries, departments and agencies support and contribute to the success of the national APRM process. In particular the role of the Ministry of Finance and/or Ministry of National Planning in ensuring that resources are made available to the process cannot be over emphasized.

Moreover, the APRM is not solely a government responsibility; non-state actors also play a key role in the implementation of the National programme of action (NPoA). The Mauritius corporate social responsibility fund that the private sector has been using to direct money towards poverty reduction is a unique, innovative and commendable non-governmental initiative.

Distinguished Participants,

The task before you is huge and quite challenging. Allow me to recognize here the conspicuous work already undertaken by the High Level Implementation Committee led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius. As participants of this workshop I am fully cognizant of the responsibility you carry in order to ensure the effective implementation of the NPoA.

Honourable Minister,

Distinguished Participants,

This workshop marks a milestone in moving the national APRM process forward. It is also my fervent hope and belief that such collaborative efforts will greatly enhance the implementation and integration of the NPOA of Mauritius in the national development processes.

I wish you fruitful deliberations,

Thank you for your kind attention.