



SPEECH

**His Excellency Mr Dharambeer Gokhool G.C.S.K.,
President of the Republic of Mauritius**

**EVENT: UNVEILING OF STRATEGIC PLAN 2025-29,
LAUNCHING OF BIOPSYCHOSOCIAL-SPIRITUAL
APPOACH TO COUNSELLING VICTIMS AND
PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE**

VENUE: VOILA HOTEL, BAGATELLE

DATE: 18 JUNE 2025

TIME: 10:40 HOURS

Protocol

Mr Barlen Vyapoory, former Vice President of the Republic

Her Excellency Ms. Lisa Simrique Singh, UN Resident Coordinator for Mauritius and Seychelles

Father Philippe Goupille, President of the Council of Religions

Pastor David White, Vice-President of the Council of Religions

Miss Aleeya Lallmahomed, Secretary of the Council of Religions

Esteemed members of the Council of Religions

Distinguished Guests

ALL PROTOCOL OBSERVED

Introduction

Good morning and thank you for inviting me to today's event.

I would like to thank the previous speakers for their address and their thoughtful observations and remarks.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am very happy to be associated with the launching of the Council of Religions' Strategic Plan 2025-2029 and the book entitled "Bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach to counselling victims and perpetrators of violence"

After my meeting with a delegation of the Council, led by Father Philippe Goupille, at State House on 7th April 2025, this is my second interaction with the Council.

Council of Religions

Ladies and Gentlemen

Before assuming my responsibility as President of the Republic of Mauritius in December 2024, I was aware of the existence of the Council of Religions as well as a few of its activities to promote its mission.

I must say that I learnt quite a lot during our meeting on 7th April 2025 and I thank the delegation for enlightening me about the mission, vision, the responsibilities, the projects and activities and the publications of the Council.

I distinctly remember that you had mentioned to me back then, that a Strategic Plan was under preparation.

I am happy to note that this Strategic Plan has been finalized and is being launched today.

So, I express sincere congratulations to all those who have worked on this project.

Through my interactions with my predecessors at State House, I am also aware of the regular exchanges between State House and the Council of Religions and the involvement of State House in many of your activities.

I have also been interacting regularly with a cross section of socio-cultural and religious organisations, and their contributions in maintaining a healthy and harmonious social fabric, and infusing a sense of duty, unity, peace, harmony and a deep sense of patriotism among our fellow citizens, are most valuable.

Remarkable Achievements

While preparing my address for today, I had the opportunity to take stock of a remarkable number of achievements to the credit of the Council namely:

- The Intercultural Education also known as the ICE project, involving the offer of a Certificate and a Diploma in Peace and Interfaith Studies.
- A Regional Exchange Program at university level and your membership of the African Council of Religious Leaders (ACRL)
- The holding of a 2 full days' workshop on the 3 Stages of life: Birth, Marriage & Death, and the publication of a Booklet of that theme, to explain the rites, rituals, scientific and spiritual approach on the symbolism of Birth, Marriage and Death as per the Scriptures of their different faiths.
- The organization of a National Conference on the theme conference 'Caring for our Common Future – Advancing Shared Well-being'.
- Field research and Counselling awareness campaigns,
- The celebration of numerous religious festivals, together with your engagement with our youth and the elderly, and
- Your reflections and contribution on both national and internal issues.

This is not an exhaustive list of your remarkable track record.

And today, with your rich and remarkable track record in promoting interfaith dialogue, understanding, harmony and unity, you have presented to us your future aims and intentions in line with your vision and mission of a society based on shared, universal values.

I stand here to pay my tribute to you, your members and well-wishers for your exemplary, highly professional, inspiring and commendable efforts and achievements.

In life we come across three categories of people: Those who watch things happen; those who wonder what happened and those people who make things happen.

You are the breed of people who have made things happen and I am confident that you will remain faithful and committed to your dedication as pilgrims of love, peace, harmony and unity.

I commend and congratulate you for your Strategic Plan 2025-2029, a roadmap based on purpose, clarity, and coordinated action.

Greater interfaith exchange

Today, our society the Republic of Mauritius and the whole world need people and organizations who not only walk their talk but also act as inspirational role models.

Mauritius has always been a melting pot of cultures, ethnicities and religions; where the freedom to practise our religion and our unity in diversity, have been our greatest strengths.

We must do everything possible to preserve this unique heritage.

We must continue to learn from one another, listen with empathy, and collaborate more meaningfully across faiths.

I am also very happy that you are continuing with your commitment to helping our society grapple with one of the most pervasive and daunting problem of modern societies-violence in all its forms, especially violence women are the victims-GBV.

What is particularly disturbing is that more heinous and complex forms of GBV, especially with the advent of technology and online exposure

to violence, are officially being reported in our nation-for example, acid attacks and revenge pornography.

I am sure you are aware of the alarming rising tide of violence in our schools and homes.

Biopsychosocial-spiritual approach

In your approach, you are not only addressing those who suffer from violence-the victims but also the perpetrators.

I would like to take this opportunity to commend and congratulate Miss Aaleeya Lallmahomed and all those who have collaborated in the conception of a bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach to counselling people affected by violence.

This comprehensive, holistic, multidisciplinary, inclusive, humanist approach –the bio-psych-social-and spiritual approach-to dealing with the problem of violence and its consequences that incorporates religious and spiritual beliefs, practices, and experiences that influence an individual’s mental health and overall well-being, is not only very laudable but is also strong message that there is a solution to every problem that we face as human beings.

While we must not excuse wrongdoing and the rule of law must prevail, we must look beyond the crime committed, empower survivors, prioritize rehabilitation and understand the community responsibilities involved in order to break the cycle of violence.

I have no doubt this modern pedagogy and methodology of dealing with the problem of violence that you are advocating in the book being launched to-day will go a long way in “in bringing a spiritual solution to victims and perpetrators of violence”.

Faith and Governance are Partners

The Council of Religions' vision and mission of building a society which connects the hearts and souls of people through the sharing and the nurturing of universal religious and spiritual values which define the very essence of being a true human being.

It is my conviction that governance and faith are not adversarial, but major partners in providing the compass between good and evil.

Our Government Programme 2025-29, which I had the honour to present on 24th January 2025, already affirms that happy, supported families and inclusive communities are the bedrock of national stability.

As the President of the Republic, I can assert that the vision and mission of your organization and that of the Presidency go in the same direction, and we can continue to work together hand in hand- la main dans la main-as one people, as one nation, in peace, justice and liberty.

And make the Republic of Mauritius the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean.

Conclusion

I look forward to the successful implementation of this Strategic Plan and the new and innovative model of dealing with violence.

May God bless you. Congratulations once again et bonne continuation.

May God bless our nation. Thank you for your attention.