



## **SPEECH**

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

**EVENT: Conversation with Professor Thulisile Madonsela-  
Fighting Corruption and other Financial Crimes: Advancing Social Justice**

**VENUE: FCC Headquarters, Réduit Triangle, Moka**

**DATE: Tuesday, 9 December 2025**

**TIME: 09.30 hrs**

## **Protocol**

Mr. Abdool Rashid Ahmine, Senior Counsel, Director of Public Prosecutions

Mr. Titrudeo Dawoodarry, Acting Director-General, Financial Crimes Commission

Professor Thulisile Madonsela, Law Trust Chair in Social Justice, Law Professor and Former Public Protector of South Africa

Mrs. Johanne Hague;

Officers of the Financial Crimes Commission

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All Protocol Observed

## **Introduction**

Good morning.

It is an honour to join you today as we mark UN International Anti-Corruption Day, celebrated on 9 December 2025, with this year's theme:

Uniting with Youth against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity.

This is a UN initiative under the Office on Drugs and Crime.

I thank the Financial Crimes Commission for organising this event and for inviting an eminent figure such as Professor Madonsela, whose courage and clarity have inspired governance reforms across continents.

This is yet another laudable initiative of FCC to deepen our national conversation on integrity, social justice and the responsibility that each of us carries to protect the soul of our Republic.

I am particularly pleased that the focus of this year's event is on our youth, who constitute some 1.9 billion in the world today, and who are the direct victims of corruption and economic crimes which deprive them of resources that should be committed to improving their education, health and employment and career prospects.

As pointed out by UN:

**“Young people are at the forefront of this digital transformation, using their skills as innovators, developers and engaged digital citizens to create solutions that increase transparency, broaden access to information and enable secure, anonymous reporting for whistle-blowers”.**

Ladies and Gentlemen

**Corruption is not only a crime. It is much more than a crime-it is a betrayal of trust.** It steals from the poor, weakens institutions and distorts the moral contract that binds a nation together. When corruption grows, inequality, injustice grows.

When integrity grows, institutional governance, transparency and accountability become stronger and the legitimacy of Governments improves. Democracy and social justice flourishes, contributing to the overall welfare and well-being of the people.

This is why today's theme is so **important**: fighting corruption is not simply a legal obligation, it is a governance and social justice imperative.

**Referencing the Past: A Reminder of Principles**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Some of you may recall that during a previous engagement with the Financial Crimes Commission, at the national workshop for Rectors on preventing financial crimes, I stated that the fight against corruption does not begin in the courtroom, it begins in the classroom.

I reminded our educators that by the time a financial crime is committed, moral damage has already occurred upstream in the values and choices internalised by young people.

That message remains as relevant today as it was then. But it goes one step further as it is a call for the engagement of our youth **“to uphold ethical standards in their communities and challenge corruption at every level”**.

The fight against financial crime needs strong institutions but also a society anchored in conscience. When the efforts of the school, the home, our youth and the State combine and adhere to the same moral direction, corruption finds no oxygen to survive.

### **Strengthening Integrity through Institutions**

Mauritius has always believed that strong institutions are the backbone of a credible democracy.

The work of the **National Audit Office** remains central in this endeavour.

Year after year, the Audit Office shines a light on public financial management, identifies vulnerabilities and reinforces accountability across ministries and parastatal bodies.

Its independence is nonnegotiable and essential for public trust.

Equally important is the **Office of Public Sector Governance**, which ensures that our state agencies operate with discipline, clarity of mandate and proper oversight.

Good governance is not a document on a shelf. It is a daily practice. It is culture. And it is leadership at every level of public administration.

In addition, the **Declaration of Assets Act** has strengthened transparency by requiring officials in positions of public responsibility to make their assets known.

This legal obligation protects not only the public but also the integrity of those who serve.

Other institutions like the FIU, FSC, the MRA, the Police authorities, the FCC, the DPP's office, the Judiciary and the National Assembly as well as watchdog agency like Transparency International all form part of our national efforts to combat corruption and economic crimes.

We may be winning some battles but are we winning the war?

As President, I am attentive to the nation's voice and concerns about corruption and conscious of our national efforts being deployed.

But the message which echoes back to me is:

In the corruption net we find the small fish but where are the big sharks? Why are they not being brought to justice and made to pay for their crimes?

### **Modern Enforcement to Protect the System**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As financial crimes evolve, our institutions, our human resources and our technologies must evolve faster. We must continue to reinforce its ecosystem of investigation, supervision and enforcement.

The **Financial Crimes Commission**, working with partners such as the **Bank of Mauritius**, the **Financial Intelligence Unit** and the **Registrar of Companies**, forms a coordinated shield against money laundering, illicit flows and emerging financial crimes.

The FIU provides early warning.

The Bank of Mauritius ensures the integrity of our financial system.

The FCC investigates.

The DPP's office prosecutes.

These mechanisms together aim to make Mauritius a safer jurisdiction for investors and a fairer environment for our citizens. The direction is clear: no safe space for corruption, no hiding place for illicit wealth. But we must do more, go further.

That is why Government has decided to come forward with the establishment of the **National Crime Office** “**which will be better equipped to deal more effectively with financial and other serious crimes.**”

**To enhance transparency in the political sphere, combat corruption and ensure free and fair elections, Government will introduce legislation on the funding of political parties.**

**Also,**

**An Ethics and Integrity Commissioner will be appointed to advise public and private entities on the implementation of policies and practices that will facilitate compliance with the principles of integrity and good governance.**

This is yet another major, important step. It embodies our national commitment to fight serious crime in all its forms with better coordination, sharper intelligence, and stronger investigative capacity.

## **How the World Sees Mauritius**

In a connected world, governance is judged not only by citizens but also by international bodies.

Our performance on the **Transparency International Corruption Perception Index** is one such mirror.

It reminds us of where we stand and where improvement is required. Rankings matter, not for prestige, but because they influence investor confidence, national reputation and the trust our youth have in the future of their country.

Similarly, **rating agencies** carefully evaluate the health of our economy, the resilience of our institutions and the predictability of our policies.

Sound governance is therefore not just a moral duty. It is an economic imperative.

Countries with credibility attract investment. Countries with strong institutions create opportunities. Countries with transparency create stability and trust.

## **Corruption is not destiny. Reform is a choice.**

Professor Madonsela often says that corruption is not a force of nature. It is a human decision.

Which means integrity is also a human decision. The choice to serve honestly. The choice to resist temptation. The choice to speak when silence would be more comfortable.

In Mauritius, we have reached a moment where institutions must be supported, laws must be enforced without fear or favour and every

leader must internalise a simple principle: **public office is a public trust**.

But institutions alone cannot win this fight.

Society must also change. Families must teach values. Schools must nurture character.

Professionals must uphold ethics. Citizens must demand accountability. And leaders must lead by example.

Our youth in particular, who are at the forefront of this digital transformation, must be empowered to use their digital knowhow **“to create solutions that increase transparency, broaden access to information and enable secure, anonymous reporting for whistle-blowers”**.

### **A Future Built on Trust**

Our goal is not only to catch wrongdoers. Our goal is to build a culture where wrongdoing does not flourish.

A culture where decisions are transparent, procedures are fair and every rupee spent is traceable.

This is why conversations like today are important. When we speak openly about corruption, we weaken it. When we learn from global experts, we strengthen ourselves. When we align our institutions, we accelerate progress.

Mauritius has always been capable of transformation.

We have transformed our economy. We transformed our welfare state. Now we must transform our governance culture so that future generations inherit a country where integrity is the norm and not the exception.

Let us remember a simple truth:

**Corruption destroys nations quietly, but integrity builds them loudly!**

### **Closing**

I thank the Financial Crimes Commission for organising this event. I thank Professor Madonsela for honouring us with her presence.

And I thank every participant for being part of this national movement for transparency and justice.

Let us walk forward together.

Let us protect the credibility of our institutions.

Let us safeguard the future of our Republic.

Let us remind ourselves of the statement made by Ban KiMoon, Former SG of the UN:

“A nation cannot rise when its foundation is rooted in corruption.”

And as we do so, let us reaffirm the spirit that has always carried our nation forward: **As one people, as one nation. In peace, justice and liberty.**

Thank you.