



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: RECEPTION IN HONOUR OF DIPLOMATIC AND
CONSULAR CORPS**

VENUE: STATE HOUSE

DATE: 06 FEBRUARY 2026

TIME: 19:00 HOURS

Protocol

His Excellency Mr. Robert Hungley, Vice-President of the Republic of Mauritius, and Mrs. Hungley

Honourable Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Honourable Hambyrajen Narsinghen, Junior Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

Her Excellency Dr. Hlamalani Nelly Manzini, Dean of the Diplomatic Corps,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Members of the Media,

Ladies and Gentlemen.

Introduction

Bonsoir. Good evening.

Thank you for responding to our invitation

It is with immense pleasure that I welcome you to the State House as we reflect on a year of intense diplomatic activity and, more importantly, reaffirm the enduring bonds of friendship between Mauritius and the nations and organisations you so ably represent, as we usher in the year 2026.

Once again, our best wishes for the New Year 2026 to you; your families and to the countries you have the honour to represent.

On 15th January, the Honourable Dhananjay Ramful, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration, and International Trade, had the honour of hosting you during a **Vin d'Honneur**, where he outlined the achievements of 2025 and our Republic's agenda on the bilateral and multilateral front, in line with the Government Programme 2025-2029.

Excellencies,

As you are aware, last year tested our collective resilience, unfolding against a backdrop of persistent geopolitical and economic uncertainty.

As a Small Island Developing State, Mauritius was not spared from these pressures.

Yet, our nation remained steadfast, guided by a principled and forward-looking foreign policy, under the leadership of the Honourable Prime Minister, and sustained by the active engagement of the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Diplomatic Resilience

Last year also marked my first year in Office as the 8th President of the Republic of Mauritius, during which I had the honour of presenting to the nation, the Government Programme 2025-2029.

A forward-looking roadmap, founded on the principles of inclusion, resilience, and sustainable development, which resonates strongly with the orientation of our international engagement.

One that reaffirms Mauritius' steadfast commitment to good governance, social cohesion, digital transformation, climate resilience, and the development of human capital.

To sustain and consolidate this trajectory, the Government is currently engaged in charting a transformational road map: the **Mauritius Vision 2050**.

Our national priorities align closely with our international responsibilities, and with the partnerships we cherish and seek to further consolidate - both at regional and international levels.

Support and Expertise

In this context, the continued support, expertise, and cooperation of the Diplomatic and Consular Corps remain indispensable and play a catalytic role, as the Republic of Mauritius moves confidently towards a future that is economically resilient, socially just, and globally responsible.

Role of the Presidency in Diplomacy

As Head of State, I wish to renew my pledge to work very closely with all of you in furthering the bonds of partnership and friendship between our countries and our people.

Excellencies,

It is both my profound privilege and solemn responsibility to project the values and aspirations of Mauritius on the international front and to serve as a catalyst for deepening the bonds we share with our foreign partners - ties founded on shared principles, mutual respect, and enduring friendship.

The Presidency embodies our core values, reflecting our unwavering commitment to international law, the promotion of human rights, and a steadfast dedication to regional integration.

Certain cherished traditions continue to guide our diplomatic engagements.

Foremost among these remains the presentation of Letters of Credence, where the State House serves as the symbolic first step for every Ambassador and High Commissioner.

Over the past year, I have had the honour of receiving credentials from distinguished envoys representing friendly nations, including:

Canada, Bulgaria, Brazil, Jamaica, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland; Greece, New Zealand, the Czech Republic, Finland, Viet Nam, Georgia, Colombia, China, and Tunisia.

Each ceremony has marked a new chapter in our relations and has provided an opportunity for a fruitful exchange of perspectives on our shared aspirations for deeper collaboration in the common interest of our people.

Likewise, the National Day Celebrations organised by your Embassies and High Commissions are occasions we hold in the highest regard, offering a distinguished opportunity to honour the enduring bonds between our nations and to commend the exemplary commitment with which you cultivate these ties.

It is always a profound pleasure to engage with members of your diaspora in Mauritius - who have made our country their second home and continue to enrich our society, contributing immeasurably to our nation's advancement and shared prosperity.

As I always stress during our meetings, we must aim to leave behind a legacy of which we can be proud.

Human-Centered and Values-Based diplomacy

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2025 has also been distinguished by historic visits, high-level exchanges, and active engagement in multilateral forums, reflecting Mauritius' growing prominence and influence on the international stage.

In November, I had the distinct privilege of welcoming the President of the French Republic, His Excellency Emmanuel Macron, and in March, the Honourable Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Shri Narendra Modi.

I was likewise honoured to represent Mauritius at the 50th Anniversary celebrations of the Independence of the Union of the Comoros in July - a moment to reaffirm the enduring fraternal bonds with our close neighbour.

Drawing upon my lifelong career in education and my privileged tenure as Minister of Education and Human Resource, it is my conviction that Presidency is most effective when infused with a personal and purposeful dimension.

One that preserves our cherished traditions while responding with vision to the exigencies of a rapidly evolving world.

Human Dimension

In this context, diplomacy **must** extend beyond ceremonial engagement to attend to the human dimension of society - empowering our youth, advancing education, celebrating culture, and fostering social inclusion- the very foundations upon which our resilience, progress, and international standing rest.

This vision has guided my international engagements this past year:

- At the 7th AU - EU Summit in Luanda, Angola, I articulated Mauritius' steadfast commitment to regional integration and the shared aspirations of the African continent.

- At the 20th Internet Governance Forum (IGF) in Oslo, Norway, I joined global leaders in advocating for a multi stakeholder, human-centred, and rights-based Internet governance model.
- I also emphasized that we keep in mind what best serves the interest of humanity at large without compromising the needs of the most vulnerable components of our society.
- Similarly, at the 3rd World Telugu Conference in Andhra Pradesh, India, earlier this year, I spoke of language not merely as a tool for communication, but as a "living civilization" and a spiritual legacy.

State House as a House for All Mauritians

The enduring strength of our bonds lies not only in shared interests, but in the profound connections between our people and the shared humanity that unites us all.

This is why, closer to home, I have made it my mission to ensure that the State House remains a House for all visitors.

Over the past year alone, we have welcomed some 10,000 visitors - individuals from diverse backgrounds, yet united by a shared pursuit of positive and meaningful change.

In them, I see champions for a better future, whose efforts deserve both recognition and celebration.

In this spirit, we convened a Round Table Forum on Disability Inclusion and Empowerment in July 2025, together with representatives of the United Nations in Mauritius, the National Human Rights Commission, and civil society.

The deliberations and recommendations emerging from this dialogue have already borne fruit, notably through the establishment of an inter-ministerial committee on Disabilities - demonstrating how inclusive engagement can shape meaningful public policy and advance the rights of all citizens.

Concluding Remarks

Excellencies,

It is my singular pleasure this evening to acknowledge your invaluable contribution to the steadfast partnership between Mauritius and your nations and your people.

I commend you for your dedication and convey my very best wishes for the year 2026 as you continue this vital work.

Your engagement is central to the progress and global standing of Mauritius.

The achievements of our nation are closely intertwined with your enduring support.

Through your commitment - whether in development cooperation, capacity building, education, investment, or humanitarian action - you make tangible contributions to our national priorities and the wellbeing of our people.

Yet, your role extends far beyond programmes and projects.

Your presence strengthens mutual understanding, fosters dialogue, and reinforces Mauritius' integration into the global community.

For this sustained and invaluable contribution to our nation's development and international standing, I extend to you my sincere appreciation.

I would like to share with you a note of reflection before I conclude:

The ultimate goal of diplomacy should be to promote peace, prosperity and unity for humanity.

Excellencies,

In closing, let us reaffirm our commitment to a diplomacy that is both distinguished, transformative and vibrant - one that places people, shared values, and the aspirations of our youth and the future generation at its very heart.

I would now like to invite the Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps to join me in a toast:

“To the prosperity of our nations and continued collaboration with your organisations, to the enduring bonds of friendship, and to a peaceful, sustainable and inclusive 2026.”

Thank you all for your presence. I wish you a memorable evening.