



SPEECH

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

**EVENT: CHINESE NEW YEAR INTERNATIONAL GALA 2026
BY CHINA TOWN FOUNDATION**

VENUE: TRIANON CONVENTION CENTRE

DATE: 07 FEBRUARY 2026

TIME: 17:00 HOURS

Protocol

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

Honourable Ministers and Junior Ministers,

Excellencies and Members of the Diplomatic Corps

Honourable Members of the National Assembly

Mr Jean Paul Lam, President of the China Town Foundation

Distinguished Guests

All Protocol Observed

Introduction

Good evening. Bonsoir. Wan Shang Hao.

Thank you for your invitation and for your warm welcome.

I am very happy, together with my wife Brinda, to join you this evening in an atmosphere of fraternity, elegance, and happiness, to celebrate the coming of the Chinese New Year - a time of renewal, hope, and shared joy.

Cultural Event

Just like last year, once again, I am among you to celebrate this auspicious occasion.

Allow me, at the outset, on behalf of the Government of Mauritius and in my own name, to extend my warmest wishes to the Government of the People's Republic of China, to the people of China, to all members of our valued Sino-Mauritian community, and to the Mauritian diaspora across the world, on this special occasion.

This evening's International Gala Dinner is also a special cultural event.

It brings together tradition and creativity in a vibrant cultural experience, offering a valuable space for our local artists - especially our youth - to exchange, learn, and collaborate with accomplished international talents, thereby enriching our cultural life and opening new horizons for future generations.

I commend the China Town Foundation, and all its partners, for their dedication and vision in bringing together this wonderful event and for their continued commitment to the preservation and transmission of cultural heritage, excellence and inclusiveness.

I thank our local artists and performers for their talent, commitment, and contribution.

And I extend a warm welcome in particular to our artists, performers, and guests from overseas.

It was a great pleasure to receive many of you at the State House yesterday, where we exchanged reflections on culture, creativity, and the unifying power of the arts.

I hope our overseas visitors have enjoyed their visit to State House.

WO SI WANG WOMENDA HAÏ WEY FANKE ZAÏ CHOU YI HOUÏ
DAASHA DA FANGWEY YUKHWAY

I hope that you are enjoying the warmth, friendship and hospitality of Mauritius.

Chinese New Year and Shared Values

Chinese New Year is deeply rooted in meaning and symbolism.

It is a time to reflect on the year that has passed, to honour family and ancestors, and to look ahead with optimism, responsibility, and renewed purpose.

In our rainbow nation, it has become a national celebration embraced by all. It is a constant and graceful reminder of who we truly are – a rainbow nation, a people united by diversity and strengthened by mutual respect.

The Year of the Horse,(Maa Niyen)as we all know, symbolises energy, resilience, determination, and progress.

These are values that must continue to guide us - individually and collectively - as we move forward together, firmly grounded in humility, respect, and solidarity.

Mauritius -China Friendship

Distinguished Guests,

This celebration is also a meaningful expression of the enduring friendship and mutual respect that unite Mauritius and the People's Republic of China.

Since the establishment of formal diplomatic relations in 1972, our ties have matured into a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership based on trust, dialogue, and shared aspirations.

But beyond formal frameworks, it is our people-to-people exchanges, cultural understanding, and acts of solidarity that give true depth and humanity to this relationship.

I wish to place on record my sincere appreciation and heartfelt gratitude to the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, under the

distinguished leadership of Her Excellency Dr Huang Shifang, for its thoughtful and meaningful initiatives that have touched the lives of many in our country.

Last year, in a spirit of collaboration, we extended support to young victims of drug abuse undergoing rehabilitation at the Centre d'Accueil de Terre Rouge.

We were also able to help children at the Gayasingh Ashram, as well as senior citizens through the provision of medical beds.

These gestures remind us that even small initiatives, when undertaken with generosity and compassion, carry profound significance, and that the true strength of our partnership lies in our shared humanity and enduring friendship.

I am confident that our cooperation will continue to foster the shared progress of our people.

Reflections

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year marks the second year of my mandate as President of the Republic of Mauritius, and nation-building remains my foremost mission.

Such a mission can only be fulfilled through the active participation and engagement of all our citizens.

Our Sino-Mauritian community continues to hold a cherished and respected place within the fabric of our nation, through entrepreneurship, cultural stewardship, and a steadfast commitment to social responsibility.

Our freedom to be different, yet to remain one, is our greatest strength.

We are a nation where unity does not require uniformity, but flourishes through the celebration of our distinct identities together.

The month of February offers a particularly eloquent reflection of this very spirit of our unity in diversity.

Within this single month, we have commemorated Thaipoosam Cavadee.

We are preparing to observe Maha Shivratri.

The month of Ramadan and the period of Lent are approaching; and tonight, we gather to celebrate the Chinese New Year.

As President of the Republic, I have the distinct privilege, through my official duties, to commemorate and celebrate these deeply meaningful events alongside our citizens.

In a world increasingly marked by conflict and division, these celebrations remind us that what unites us is far stronger than what divides us - guided by empathy and our shared humanity.

Yet, it is not enough to simply live side by side.

We must move beyond multiculturalism towards **interculturalism** - where we actively learn from each other's communities, cultures, and religions through dialogue and lived experiences.

In language, food, festivals, and traditions, and in our willingness to embrace new perspectives, we must find simple yet powerful ways to open our hearts.

It is in this openness, mutual curiosity and respect, that we can truly reflect the true ethos of our Republic- As One People, As One Nation.

Conclusion

In closing, allow me to thank the organisers once again for this wonderful evening, which brings together tradition, talent, and friendship in a beautiful way.

Together, let us continue to strengthen the understanding between our communities and celebrate the richness of our diversity.

May the coming year bring health, happiness, harmony, and prosperity to you all; to your friends, families and loved ones.

(Xin Nian Kuai Le)

Sing Nien Khwai La

Happy New Year.

I wish you a memorable and joyful evening.

Thank you.