"My Ministry has the pleasure to welcome you to this signature ceremony of the Country Programming Framework – CPF – for the Republic of Mauritius for the coming 4 years with the Food and Agricultural Organisation.

As you are aware, my Ministry has been struggling and putting every ounce of effort required to

- promote a sustainable agriculture

- encourage youth into the sector and
provide assistance to farmers to cope with climate change, pests and diseases

It is no doubt that the FAO has been on our side every step of the way by providing expertise, capacity building, advice and financial assistance.

The CPF document once again lays down and renews our shared and mutual commitment towards

1. elimination of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
2. making agriculture, forestry and fisheries more sustainable

3. reducing rural poverty

4. enabling inclusive and efficient agricultural and food systems and lastly increasing the resilience of livelihoods from disasters

These objectives also contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals – SDGs – which can be achieved with the spirit of partnership and
pragmatism to make the right choices now for the future.

I must acknowledge that the preparation of the CPF could not have been possible without the collaboration of the other Ministries present and the support of the FAO to pulse and examine our vision in the same lines as those of the SDG’s, the Vision 2030 and the strategic framework of my ministry for the crop, livestock and forestry sector.

The three priorities identified for the coming 4 years are:
Firstly: Promotion of climate smart and organic agriculture for enhanced food security and safety;

Secondly: Support to Agribusiness Development for selected strategic value chain and

Thirdly: Promotion of sustainable aquaculture, off-lagoon fisheries and fish consumption.

To mark this important event and put momentum to the words as we speak I wish to inform you that we
will also be signing in coming days with the CPF another Technical Cooperation Programme – TCP– for Rodrigues entitled:

**Strengthening rural development planning in Rodrigues through land suitability maps and natural resource information systems.**

This goes again in line with the policy of the Government that Rodrigues should not be left out at any cost and instead be the driver and trend-setter for agricultural innovations.
I am informed that there are already another 3 TCP facilities in the pipeline that will deal with addressing the priority objectives for namely:

- Reviewing the institutional framework of the fisheries sector

- Development of a National Animal Identification and recording System in Mauritius

- Support for the National legislation and implementing regulations of Organic Farming in Mauritius

With these words I wish to thank the FAO for the support they have been providing the Republic of
Mauritius and also for the forthcoming support they will be providing the country and our fellow countrymen to make our island a better place.

I thank you for your attention."