Let me first of all warmly welcome you here today for the launching of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals campaign.

It is indeed a distinct pleasure and great honour for me to be here with you to launch this campaign. I wish to begin by placing on record my heartfelt appreciation to the office of the United Nations Development Programme in Mauritius and the Standard Chartered Mauritius for their valuable contribution in this laudable event.

As some of you may know, the purpose of this campaign is to share information with all stakeholders and citizens on the sustainable development goals which are currently being adopted by our leaders in New York. As you would recall, the MDGs have remained a focus of global policy debates and national policy planning in many developing countries since their adoption in the year 2000. As the MDG process is
ending this year, there was widespread concern to address limitations associated with the process and to come up with a new agenda which would include a wider set of goals with higher profile to be developed through a bottom up approach. The focus is now on building a sustainable world where environmental sustainability, social inclusion, and economic development are equally valued.

As our leaders are currently attending the United Nations Summit in New York to adopt the new development agenda “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, I am delighted to share with you that we undertake to collaborate with all stakeholders to ensure that each and every citizen are fully aware of the agenda and the sustainable development goals, which represent a global commitment to a future without extreme poverty, one where we live together sustainably, and in peace. It seeks to ensure a future of opportunity and prosperity, free of violence and discrimination, and a harmonious existence with the planet. Mauritius is proud to be part of such event which is of crucial significance to the future of our people and our planet, and has been active in the global conversation to approve the Post 2015 Development agenda. The vision and the goals in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development echoes our aspirations and concerns. It is in line with the Economic Vision 2030 that the Honourable Prime Minister has shared with us a few weeks ago, and which lays the foundations to transform the country into a knowledge based economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Since the adoption of the Millennium declaration in 2000, we have spared no effort in fulfilling our international pledge and have ensured that the Millennium Development Goals and targets attributed to the Millennium Declaration figure prominently in the overall development planning and policy orientation of the country. Two days ago, I had the privilege of launching the fourth and final report on the achievements of
Mauritius with respect to the MDGs. While Mauritius has achieved significant progress on the MDGs, the country still faces daunting challenges such as the widening of income gap, unemployment, health, ageing population, substance abuse, food insecurity and vulnerability to highly volatile food prices, heavy dependence on fossil fuel, environment and climate change issues, and limited access to international financial assistance for development.

The Sustainable Development Goals which are replacing the Millennium Development Goals, are universal in nature, and provide a timeframe and impetus to address those challenges. They go beyond the MDGs as they encompass the means of implementation, technology transfer, data monitoring and they include stand-alone goals on the ocean and climate change which are going to affect the livelihood of all of us. Therefore, the efforts that has been deployed to achieve the MDGs need to be intensified in our quest to achieve the new agenda. They will complete what the MDGS did not achieve, and go much further in addressing the challenges I have mentioned.

Our own national Vision 2030 will be catalytic towards mainstreaming our needs towards fostering a sustainable transformative socio-economic growth for our country. It will guide us towards achieving both the gaps of the MDGs and the SDGs. It will bring Mauritius to the path to becoming a high income economy with greater investment and employment thereby achieving a second economic miracle.

As we prepare for the implementation of the Post 2015 Development Agenda, we are fully determined to mobilising all Mauritians to address the development challenges facing our country. Some experts have recently concluded that it would be difficult to meet some of the SDGs such as climate change, protection of marine environment and income inequality by 2030 at a global level. However, I am of the view that the goals could be within our reach provided that all governments, global institutions, the
private sector, civil society and citizens move quickly to realise this ambitious vision. Therefore, a successful implementation of the SDGs will require a new multi-stakeholder mode of governance with the involvement of all parties – the Member States, the business community and the civil society should act in unity of purpose. In this respect, we should encourage the setting up of national, regional and international platforms including various stakeholders for a genuine dialogue and implementation.

Correspondingly, it is imperative to ensure that each and every stakeholder are fully aware of the new agenda, not only to ensure a successful implementation of the sustainable development goals, but also enable them to hold governments accountable for the future of our planet. In this context, I wish to reiterate my appreciation of the contribution of Standard Chartered and the UNDP on this campaign, which is a solid example of the multistakeholder approach.

I now have the immense pleasure to launch the campaign.

I thank you for your attention.