

SADC TRF Stakeholders' Meeting
Speech of Mr. Ashit Gungah, Executive Director, NPCC
31 May 2021

His Excellency, Kawaguchi Shuichiro, Ambassador of Japan to Mauritius,
Mr. Sujoy Busgeeth, the Chairman of the NPCC,
NPCC Council Members,
Mr. Narainduth Boodhoo, Director International Trade Division,
Mrs. Rena Kato, Deputy Director of the Japan Productivity Centre,
Representatives of participating companies in the SADC Trade Related Facility project,
Mrs. Khoudijah Maudarbocus-Boodoo, Policy Officer at EU
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good Morning

I have the pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you all at this stakeholders' meeting which marks an important milestone in this project.

Let me begin by first expressing my gratitude to the Southern African Development Community (SADC) for their commitment to the betterment and sustainability of African enterprises, especially at a time when the global socioeconomic landscape is shaken by the disruptions caused by Covid-19.

Mauritius, being part of the SADC bloc, has benefited from many of the intra-regional projects and initiatives. This has brought higher trade facilitation and increased commercial exchanges that contribute to the socioeconomic progress of SADC member states.

I would like to stress on the strong and highly privileged relationship between the NPCC and the JPC that dates back to 2005. The

collaboration between our two institutions has been a pinnacle in sustaining the productivity movement in Mauritius. The present SADC project highlights a landmark collaboration between the NPCC and JPC. This has not only helped Mauritian enterprises to benefit from the expertise of the JPC, but also enabled the NPCC consultants to rub shoulders with Japanese counterparts and thus further sharpen their knowledge in the field of productivity consultancy.

The SADC Trade Related Facility project along with the technical expertise of the JPC strengthens the overall ambition of the NPCC to sustain and help Mauritian enterprises in the short, medium and long terms.

The NPCC with its mandate to improve productivity and competitiveness was assigned the responsibility to collaborate with the JPC to enhance the productivity and competitiveness of a pool of enterprises, particularly in the manufacturing sector.

In this three-phase programme, a total of 27 companies underwent a complete audit, were offered training and were assisted in the implementation of an appropriate improvement programme to continuously enhance their operations. This is expected to make them more competitive on the international front.

Ever since the pandemic started spreading last year, the NPCC has left no stone unturned to help local enterprises battle against its effects and at the same time assist our local enterprises in preparing themselves for a bounce back.

As we still navigate through stormy waters, it has become critical for all of us to put hands together and align our efforts to make our enterprises resilient and come out even stronger.

While we are grateful to have been part of the SADC project, we still have more battles to fight amid the uncertainties that have characterised the business climate of the current times.

We look forward to the continued support of all our partners, national and international, to address the challenges of the moment.

Ladies and gentlemen, let me once again express my appreciation for your participation in this project and wish you all the best in the future.

Thank you for your attention.