

**Speech of The Right Honourable Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG,
QC, Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence and Minister for Rodrigues at
the
Commencement Ceremony for the ‘IOX Submarine Cable System’**

**23 May 2018 – 17 h 30
Les Cocotiers Hotel, Anse Aux Anglais, Rodrigues**

Mr Serge Clair, Chief Commissioner of Rodrigues,

Mr Nicolson Lisette, Deputy Chief Commissioner,

Distinguished Commissioners,

Mr Hee Hong Wye, Island Chief Executive,

Executives of IOX Cable Ltd,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Members of the Press,

GOOD AFTERNOON TO EVERYBODY

It gives me an immense pleasure to address you on this important occasion marking the start of the works for the IOX Submarine Cable System in Rodrigues.

I am pleased because I have always held at heart the development of Rodrigues within the overall development of the Republic of Mauritius. The last time I came here in October 2017 for the launching of the Citizen Support Portal and the celebrations marking the 15th anniversary of the autonomy of Rodrigues, I said that the implementation of the fibre optic cable project would start soon. I am happy that only a few months after, the works are indeed commencing and I am even happier to learn that the IOX Cable System is scheduled to go live in the second half of 2019.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the IOX Cable System, Rodrigues will be endowed with high-capacity, high-speed and high-quality broadband internet services. The island will be connected to the global telecommunications networks using the latest fibre optic technology.

In fact, the IOX cable system will be the third submarine cable landing in Mauritius and the first international cable in Rodrigues. Undoubtedly, it will contribute to further enhance internet connectivity and the attractiveness of the Republic of Mauritius as a cyber-hub.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are aware, the development of ICT is a priority sector for the Government of the Republic of Mauritius. In our vision 2030, it was made clear that our focus will move towards high end activities like software and animation development, big data analytics, disaster recovery and cloud computing. This, in our view, would involve a series of initiatives. In this respect, enhanced internet connectivity and communication capabilities, through a dedicated fibre optic submarine cable, will no doubt be a crucial stepping stone in, not only reaching our economic objectives, but also democratising access to high end communication.

Indeed, the IOX Cable System will create new opportunities for individuals and small businesses, while contributing significantly to business and public service efficiency. It will increase the attraction of doing business in Rodrigues for Mauritian and international companies that are investing in the BPO and ICT sectors.

Moreover, with enhanced internet connectivity, Rodrigues can become a centralized regional hub promoting digital innovation. I am sure that if we work closely together, we can achieve that goal.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The fibre optic cable system being implemented was long awaited and also long overdue.

It will connect Mauritius, Reunion Island and Rodrigues to South Africa and India. I am told, it will also allow easy connectivity to current and future submarine networks for onwards connectivity to the West Coast of Africa, Middle East, Europe, the USA and Asia. We are thus closing the digital gap between Rodrigues and the rest of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The ICT industry is called upon to move to the next level with fibre optic cable systems. I am told that two other marine surveys are underway in order to reinforce the connectivity, namely for the METISS Subsea Cable System which provides the connection to the African Continent and one more connection through the Mauritius & Rodrigues Cable System.

The network will provide a gateway to Africa as well as to the rest of the world by leveraging our industry connections and partnerships with multiple cable systems, while ensuring access to a variety of content hosted in these regions. This will open up opportunities for customers to establish valuable linkages across the industries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Mauritius is presently well engaged in revolutionising its economy by investing in innovative technology-based businesses and services. I am confident that this state of the art cable system shall open up new horizons for sustained development in Rodrigues and in Mauritius.

I will now say a few words in creole

- Mo banne sœurs et frères rodriguais, merci encore ène fois pou l'affection ek considération ki zotte finne toujours éna pou moi.
- Azordi, mo finne faire le déplacement pou lancement banne travaux concernant installation cable fibre optique ki pou connecter Rodrigues avec banne réseaux global de communication par internet.
- Sé ène moment important pou Rodrigues parski implémentation sa projet là pou ouvert banne nouvo avenues de développement économique dans Rodrigues et également démocratise l'accès à internet de haut débit.

- Couma zotte conner, technologie informatique finne revolutionne le monde et li ène outil formidable pou moderniser, réformer, former, organiser, communiquer pou facilite banne activités sociales et économiques et amène plis efficience au niveau banne services.
- Avec cable fibre optique ki pé installer dans Rodrigues et ki pou opérationnel dans deuxième moitié de 2019, nou pé assurer ki Rodrigues gagne même facilités internet ki à Maurice.
- Couma zotte conner, mo finne tout létemps pense développement Rodrigues ensam avec développement Maurice.

- Jamais mo finne faire discrimination entre les deux îles, parski sé ène sel lépep ène sel nation.
- Evidemment, nou pé bouge en étapes et nou pé donne les moyens nécessaires pou mette les deux îles lors ène pied d'égalité.
- Mo satisfait ki nou pé bouge dans bon direction et mo profite de l'occasion pou félicite, encore ène fois, le Chef Commissaire et so l'équipe pou travail ki pé faire au niveau l'Assemblée Régionale de Rodrigues.
- Sa montrer ki mo ti éna raison quand 16 ans de cela nou ti vote la loi dans Parlement pou donne autonomie administrative à Rodrigues.

- Boucoup bon travail inne faire durant sa banne l'années là et résultats visibles partout à travers Rodrigues.
- Mo vivement souhaiter ki Rodrigues continuer so cheminement au sein de la République de Maurice et ki sa faire la fierté de toute la nation mauricienne.
- Mo habituer dire ki mo apprécier boucoup mo banne compatriotes rodriguais.
- Zotte pou toujours éna mo soutien ek mo l'encouragement.
- Mo dire zotte merci pou zotte l'accueil ek zotte l'attention.