

Speech

By

*Honourable Minister of Commerce and Consumer
Protection*

for

World Metrology Day

Hennessy Park Hotel,

Ebene

03 June 2025

- **His Excellency, Mr. Oskar Benedikt, Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius and to the Republic of Seychelles**
- **His Excellency, Mr. Anurag Srivastava, High Commissioner of India to Mauritius,**
- **Mrs. D. M. Mathur Dabidin, Permanent Secretary,**
- **Mrs. S. Umavassee, Director, Legal Metrology Services**
- **Mr. V. Seedoyal, Deputy Permanent Secretary**
- **Distinguished Guests,**
- **Members of the Press**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good morning, and thank you for being here today.

We gather here not only to reflect on the essential work of the **Legal Metrology Services**, but also to mark a very special occasion—**World Metrology Day**.

Metrology, the science of measurement, lies at the foundation of modern civilization. In particular, **legal metrology** ensures that measurements used in trade and regulated sectors are accurate, consistent, and fair. It began with the simple need for fair trade, but today, it encompasses public health, safety, and environmental protection.

World Metrology Day is celebrated each year on **20th May**, commemorating the signing of the **Metre Convention in 1875**. This historic agreement laid the foundation for global cooperation in measurement science, ensuring that the same standards and units could be used consistently across borders, industries, and generations.

World Metrology Day reminds us of the **central role of metrology in science, trade, industry, and innovation**. It also brings attention to the importance of **measurement systems that are reliable, traceable, and transparent**—cornerstones of economic development and consumer protection.

This year's World Metrology Day theme – '*Measurements for all times, for all people*', underscores how measurement supports scientific discovery, industrial progress, and everyday fairness in commerce, and how its importance extends across generations and societies.

In Mauritius, our journey in legal metrology began in earnest with the **Legal Metrology Act of 1985**. Five years later, in 1990, the **Legal Metrology Division** was established to administer this law. By 2003, recognizing the expanding scope of its services—including verification, consumer protection, and calibration—the division was renamed the **Legal Metrology Services (LMS)**. This Unit, which operates

under my Ministry, plays a crucial role in **ensuring consumer protection and maintaining fair trading practices**, and act as guardians of public trust in all transactions involving measured quantities.

Why is this important?

Because **measurement is the foundation of trust** in commerce. **When consumers buy a product by weight or volume, they expect to receive exactly what they pay for.** Businesses, in turn, rely on precision to ensure compliance and protect their reputation. **Without proper calibration, the consequences can be serious—ranging from financial losses to unfair trade practices and even safety risks.**

This is where the **Legal Metrology Services** plays a pivotal role. As the **regulatory authority** responsible for ensuring accuracy in measuring instruments, the LMS protects consumer rights, upholds market integrity, and ensures a level playing field for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me highlight some of the **key activities** of the LMS:

- Verification and stamping of trade instruments;
- Issuing certificates to importers and manufacturers;

- Calibration services for public and private sectors;
- Supervision and inspection of trade equipment;
- Investigation of complaints and enforcement of the law.

The **importance of using assized instruments**— that is, instruments that are tested, verified, and officially stamped— cannot be overstated. They ensure:

- Fairness and accuracy in commercial transactions;
- Consumer confidence and transparency;
- Prevention of fraud and short-measuring;
- Support for compliance with legal and international standards.

Let us take a moment to reflect on the **achievements of the LMS in the year 2024**:

- Over **11,900 instruments** were verified and calibrated;
- **3227 trade premises** and **737 petrol pumps** have been inspected;
- **126 contraventions** were established;
- **47 consumer complaints** have been investigated;
- **2769 traders** benefited from mobile verification services;
- **47 Certificates of Suitability** were issued;
- And continued accreditation under **ISO 17025:2017**, reinforcing confidence in the quality and competence of our calibration laboratories.

Legal metrology is not just a matter of commerce—it's a matter of justice, consumer protection, and national trust.

Whether it's verifying **petrol pumps, storage tanks, or weighbridges**, or ensuring the accuracy of **baggage belts at the airport**, the LMS is there. From **food production to distilleries**, from **healthcare to retail**, their work helps sustain safety, compliance, and equity in every corner of our economy.

Moreover, the LMS's role extends to enforcement in coordination with other agencies such as the **Consumer Affairs Unit, Mauritius Revenue Authority**, and even the **Police Department** — underscoring its integral role in our regulatory framework.

Distinguished Guests,

Today, I would like to reaffirm this Government's resolve in transforming Mauritius into a resilient, modern, and innovation-led economy. Looking ahead, the **LMS is preparing for the future.**

Allow me first of all to join the Permanent Secretary in extending our sincere gratitude to the Government of India,

and to the European Union for their invaluable support in strengthening the capacity of the Legal Metrology Services. Through their generous assistance, the LMS has received valuable technical assistance through two consultants, who have helped train our officers, upgrade our practices, and align our systems with international standards.

These collaborations have significantly contributed to the ongoing modernization and strategic development of LMS, reinforcing our ability to deliver high-quality, reliable, and efficient services across all sectors.

Recognizing technological evolution and growing public expectations, **the Legal Metrology Services has embarked on a broader strategic improvement plan aimed at modernizing its operations, enhancing its regulatory framework, and strengthening national and international collaboration.**

To spearhead this evolution, our legislation will be updated in line with international best practices and the recommendations of **l'Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale.**

In parallel, a **new Legal Metrology Information System** will be launched by **September 2025**, improving service

delivery and operational efficiency. The LMIS is not merely a digital upgrade—it is part of a broader vision to build a smarter, faster, and fairer public service. It is designed to:

- Minimise red tape through end-to-end digital service delivery,
- Introduce secure online payment channels to remove unnecessary delays and optimise the trader's most precious resource: time,
- Improve traceability and accountability,
- And connect field operations seamlessly with back-office processing, even in remote areas.

Through this initiative, Government is walking the talk when it comes to business facilitation and consumer protection. It is a strong signal that Mauritius means business, and is investing in systems that deliver real value and measurable progress.

Importantly, the LMIS also aligns with our national vision of building a Smart Mauritius—where citizens and businesses can interact with Government seamlessly, securely, and with confidence in the services they receive. It is part of a broader commitment to e-government reform and digital inclusion.

Looking ahead, the planned construction of a new, purpose-built facility for the Legal Metrology Services marks a

significant milestone in our journey toward excellence. This modern infrastructure will provide upgraded laboratories, expanded calibration and verification areas, and dedicated spaces for training, public interaction, and mobile service operations.

By integrating advanced technologies, the new building will improve efficiency, reduce turnaround times, and enhance the quality and accessibility of services to businesses, industries, and consumers across Mauritius.

Mauritius also aspires to play a more proactive role in strengthening metrology systems across the Indian Ocean region. With the commissioning of the new lab and the LMIS platform, we will be well-positioned to offer technical cooperation, training, and shared services to neighbouring countries under regional partnerships such as COMESA and SADC. As recognised by the Organisation Internationale de Métrologie Légale (OIML), modern legal metrology must be digital, data-driven, and citizen-centred. Mauritius is embracing this direction with purpose and speed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to express my deep appreciation for the dedicated professionals of my Ministry and the Legal Metrology Services, whose commitment ensures

fairness, accuracy, and trust in our economy. Your work may often go unnoticed—but without it, the very foundation of trade and consumer confidence would be compromised.

Let us continue to support and strengthen legal metrology in Mauritius—for a fairer market, a safer society, and a more transparent future.

On this note, I now declare the workshop open.
