



2022-2023 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Overview

During the past year, while being fully engaged in its mission of representation and protection of members' interests, the MCCI has remained committed to bringing about innovative changes. With the guidance and full collaboration of the Council Members and members of the Sub-Commissions, the MCCI continues to strive to better serve the interests of the business community.

Major changes in the legislative and regulatory environment required that the MCCI be proactive at all times: Strong representative actions were undertaken when the interests of the business community were threatened by unilateral administrative decisions.

Once more, through its advocacy attire, the MCCI has collaborated with the government authorities and proposed measures for a more business friendly environment.

Business facilitation has also been a major component of the agenda of the institution. The MCCI has formed part of various steering committees on business facilitation aimed at simplifying the process and procedures for the issue of business permits and licenses.

On the international front, the MCCI has developed new ties with its counterparts in the Middle East and in Western Africa. The active participation in private sector initiatives in the region and beyond has further enhanced the image of the MCCI worldwide. This dynamism has been evidenced by the organisation of two major events by our institution namely the 13th Forum Economique des Iles de l'océan Indien and the GSI MEMA (Middle East, Mediterranean, Africa) Regional Forum.

The MCCI has also initiated measures to consolidate the Tax Tourist Refund Service with a view to promoting Mauritius as a tax-free destination. A new software has been developed and introduced for our shop operators so that the refund activities are conducted in a seamless and transparent manner.

The MCCI Business School has also invested in the extension of its existing premises at Ebène in order to offer a better recreational environment to the students and a better working environment to the staff.

The Mediation and Arbitration Centre (MARC) has embarked on a series of training addressed to members of the business community and of the legal profession to raise awareness on Alternative Dispute Resolution mechanisms and to promote these mechanisms among judges, lawyers, court staff, mediators, arbitrators, and members of the business community.

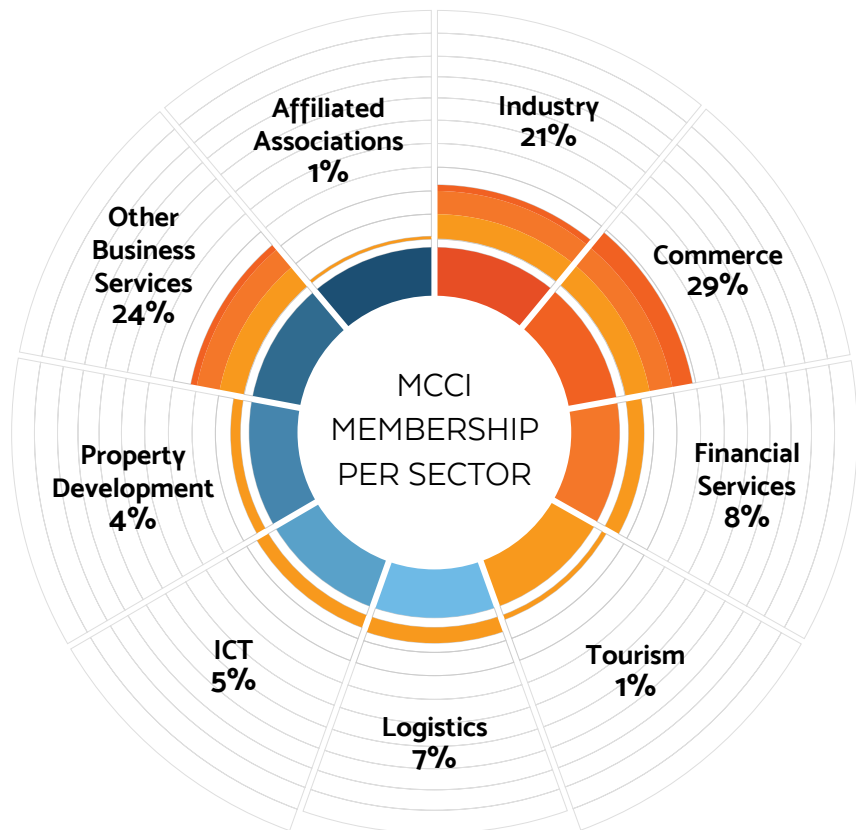
The MCCI is in the process of recruiting a new Secretary-General in replacement of Dr Yousouf Ismaël, who left in January 2023. Mrs Sarada Moothoosamy has been appointed Officer in Charge.



Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar
President

Membership

As a multisectoral membership organisation, the MCCI attaches great importance to the representative character of its membership. The membership of the organisation encompasses almost all sectors of the economy and now comprises of 15 sectoral associations.



Governance

External Audit

The Audit Committee for 2022 was chaired by the Vice-President of the MCCI, Mr. Charles Harel.

The main issues discussed at the level of the Audit Committee were the follow-up status on the implementation of the IT audit review. The Audit Committee made certain recommendations pertaining to same.

The Audit Committee also requested a complete assessment of the insurance policy to ensure that all our risks pertaining to the different activities were sufficiently covered. Following the submission of the report, the Audit Committee has recommended the introduction of new insurance cover for certain activities/ operations.

Finance

Year 2022 has been a year where the activities have started to generate more revenue although it has not reached the level of pre-Covid.

The Finance Committee that was set up under the Chairmanship of Mr Naveen Sangeelee continued its role to monitor closely the financial situation. The committee also finalized the proposition for the Shift of Defined Benefit Scheme to the Defined Contribution which was offered to staff concerned. The exercise was successfully completed with 100% shift and the process is in the final stage of completion.

Advocacy



Economy





State of the Economy Report

The State of the Economy Report 2022 was published in April 2022 and undertakes a critical assessment of the country's state of the economy by reflecting on the achievements and milestones and at the same time highlights the challenges that are hindering the growth potentials of the country.

Major issues highlighted in the report include inflation, high freight costs, the exchange rate challenge, as well as human capital and productivity bottlenecks. The report also made assessment of particular sectors such as agriculture and agri-food industry, manufacturing, and tourism, with particular emphasis on emerging sectors such as green economy, blue economy and digitalisation which will allow the economy transition to sustainable economic development.

As a way forward, the report called for responsible policy engagement while ensuring sustainability, resilience, and inclusiveness. A successful economic rebound would require significant industrial transformation, effective labour reforms, and leveraging on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), as well as improving business facilitation.



MCCI Memorandum on the Budget 2022/2023

The MCCI presented its Memorandum for the Budget 2022/2023 themed "Towards a Resilient, Sustainable and Responsible Economic Recovery" to the Government of Mauritius. Budgetary measures proposed by the MCCI pertained to a set of actions aimed at ensuring business continuity, consolidating the industrial base, easing business facilitation, boosting export, addressing structural reforms across major economic sectors as well as mitigating the adverse impacts of rising inflation on businesses and the most vulnerable households.

Economic and Trade Review 2022

In March 2022, the MCCI published its Economic and Trade Review 2022. The publication provides for an overview of key economic indicators and trade statistics for the year across all sectors.

Trade

2022 was a challenging year for the business operators after the post-covid pandemic with the tensions of Ukraine-Russia War which resulted in disruptions in both local and international trade.





LOCAL TRADE ENVIRONMENT



1. MCCI Commission on Commerce

The MCCI Commission on Commerce worked extensively over the past year and met six times to discuss and guide on trade-related issues. Several sub-committees were set-up and extensive consultations were held with MCCI members to work out the private sector positions on the various issues. Over the past year, the MCCI continued to work in close collaboration with various Ministries and agencies to defend the interests of private sector on a wide range of trade policy issues, business facilitation initiatives and trade regulatory matters.

The main issues were as follows:

(a) New Plastic Regulations



Following the enactment of the Environment Protection (Control of Single Use Plastic Products) Regulations 2020 and the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, the MCCI has made several representations to the Government highlighting the different implementation challenges faced by its members.

For the MCCI, these regulations had serious implications for business continuity in terms of high investment costs, limited alternatives, costly alternative packaging raw materials, short implementation timeline and the need for technical and financial support.

Several meetings were held with operators at the MCCI, following which, representations were made to the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change. Amendments were subsequently made to the two regulations to address practical issues raised by the private sector as well as ease the transition towards biodegradable products.

(b) Price control on essential commodities



Following the introduction of maximum prices regulations during the Covid pandemic, the Consumer Protection (Maximum Price of Essential Goods) Regulations 2021 was revoked in July 2022 and replaced with the Consumer Protection (Consumer Goods) (Maximum Mark-up) (Amendment) Regulations 2022, where twelve categories of essential products were placed under price control under the mark-up regime. These products include milk powder, edible oil, canned fish, canned tomatoes, processed cheese, margarine, pulses, infant food/infant food preparation, pasta, wheat cereals, adult diapers and baby diapers.

Several meetings were held with operators at the MCCI for a smooth transition to maximum mark-up and representations were made to the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection on the operational issues.



Several sub-committees were set-up and extensive consultations were held with MCCI members to work out the private sector positions on the various issues. Over the past year, the MCCI continued to work in close collaboration with various Ministries and agencies to defend the interests of private sector on a wide range of trade policy issues, business facilitation initiatives and trade regulatory matters.



(c) Minimum Shelf Space for Locally Manufactured Products

Following the measure announced in Budget 2021/2022 to increase the minimum shelf space for locally manufactured products from 10% to 40% within a period of one year, the MCCI-AMM Joint Technical Committee met several times to discuss on the main issues with regards to the implementation of this measure including common definitions for locally manufactured products and shelf space and international trends. A survey was also conducted with retailers to identify the current shelf space allocation of locally manufactured products in major retail outlets in Mauritius. The survey confirmed that the minimum requirement for the allocation of 40% of minimum shelf space, where locally manufactured products was available, was already being achieved.

Recommendations of the Committee were subsequently submitted to the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection for consideration.



(d) Regressive markup for Pharmaceutical Products

It was announced in the Budget Measure 2022/2023 that the margin for pharmaceutical products would be reduced through a regressive mark-up regime. Consultative meetings were held with operators in the pharmaceutical sector with the objective of addressing the practical issues and the impact on the pharmaceutical sector in Mauritius.



The Chamber made representations to the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection to highlight the impact of the regressive mark-up on the import and supply of pharmaceutical products in Mauritius.

(e) Excise stamps

As announced in the Budget 2022/2023, excise stamps would be extended on beer and wine in cans and other types of packaging.

For the Chamber, the concerns were raised on the implementation date, and the affixing of excise stamps on each individual product represented a major challenge for the industry.

Several meetings were held with operators at the MCCI, following which, representations were made and discussed with high officials at the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development and the representatives from the Mauritius Revenue Authority. A transitory of nine months were provided for the requirement to affix excise stamps on beer and wine in cans and other types of packaging.

(f) Extension of 'Sugar Tax' to New Products



Several representations made by the MCCI with regards to the extension of sugar tax on additional new products, the impact on prices of consumer goods and the challenges relating to the implementation of this measure including the method of computation. Same was proposed in the MCCI Budget Memorandum 2022/23 following meetings with MCCI members. In the Budget 2022/2023, it was announced that the implementation would be postponed to 1 July 2025.

(g) Price Observatory

The Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection has developed a mobile application for the monthly publication of prices of at least 100 commodities most widely used by consumers.

Several meetings were held with operators at the MCCI. Members have requested clarifications on the methodology used and the MCCI requested a presentation from the Ministry on the Price Observatory. A meeting was held with the representatives of the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection to discuss the concerns raised by the MCCI operators.

(h) Regulations on advertising, promotion, and sale of alcoholic products

Following the publication of the Public Health (Prohibition on Advertisement, Sponsorship and Restriction on Sale and Consumption in Public Places of Alcoholic Drinks) (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2021 in July 2021, representations were made regarding challenges faced with regard to the implementation of the new measure.

Meetings chaired by Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection were held with the MCCI, Economic Development Board and AHRIM to discuss the implementation challenges faced by operators with regard to the new regulation. Recommendations of the Committee were submitted to the Ministry of Health and Wellness for consideration.

(i) Plain Packaging for tobacco products



Following the coming into force of the Public Health (Restrictions on Tobacco and Tobacco Products) Regulations 2022 with regards to the implementation of plain packaging, the MCCI has made several representations to the Ministry of Health and Wellness highlighting the different challenges faced by the members with regard to the new regulations including the timeline for complying with the new plain packaging, and the difficulty for niche products such as cigars and cigarillos to comply with the new regulations.

Several meetings were held with operators at the MCCI and representations were made to the Ministry of Health and Wellness. The regulations were amended to take into consideration the submissions and issues raised by the MCCI.

(j) Intellectual Property Rights

The issue of Intellectual Property Rights was high on the agenda of the MCCI regarding the need to maintain the current regime of 'National Exhaustion of Rights'. The MCCI advocated strongly on the major dangers and challenges of a change in regime which would result in market inefficiencies with a direct impact on product safety, brand equity, and product traceability for key sectors such as the manufacturing, pharmaceutical, distribution, retail and automobile sectors. As way forward, government agreed to undertake a study to assess the socio-economic impact of a change in regime to international exhaustion regime for trademarks for Mauritius.



(k) Trade (Anti-dumping, Countervailing and Safeguard Measures) Act 2022

The new Trade (Anti-dumping, Countervailing and Safeguard Measures) Act was adopted in December 2022 replacing the previous legislation dating 2010. The new legislation provides for the introduction of anti-dumping, countervailing and safeguard duties for the protection of local industry against unfair trade practices as well as the setting up of a Trade Remedies Investigating Authority.



2. Commission on Industry

With a view to promoting the industrial sector in Mauritius and ensuring the necessary and conducive development of the sector, the MCCI Commission on Industry met on four occasions last year. Sub-committees were set-up and consultations were held with MCCI members to work out the private sector positions on the various issues pertaining to the industry.

(a) New Food Legislation

Consultations were held with MCCI Members on the new Food Bill and new Food Regulations. Meetings were held and comments submitted by Members were discussed with the Ministry of Health and Wellness. Several consultations with Members took place at the level of the MCCI to review and provide recommendations on the legislation.

(b) Roadmap on Circular Economy



The Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change commissioned a study aimed at developing a Roadmap and Legislative Framework on Circular Economy for Mauritius.

Various thematic working groups were set up by the Ministry of Environment, Waste Management and Climate Change, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme, to consult stakeholders and assist in the development of the Roadmap and Legislative Framework for the Circular Economy for Mauritius. The MCCI and its members were involved in the technical discussions and the Consultant was invited to make a presentation on the draft Roadmap to the MCCI Members.

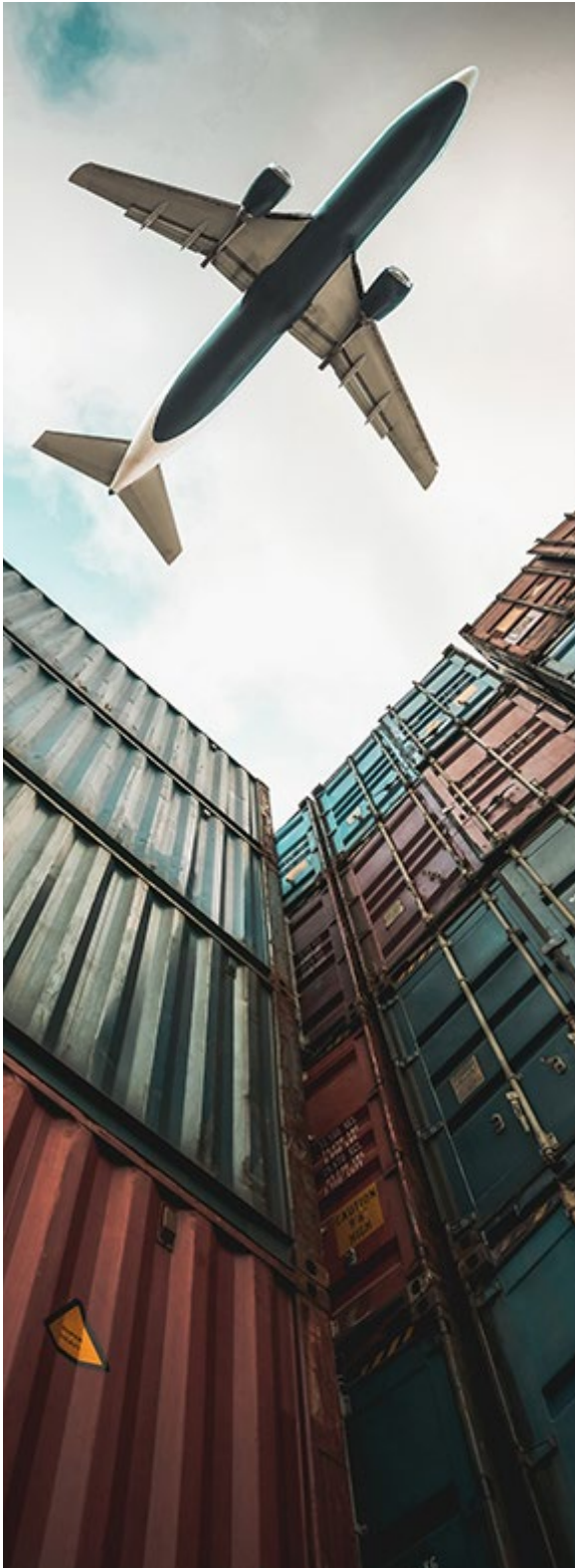
(c) Increase in Electricity Tariffs

A Consultative Meeting was held between the MCCI and the Utility Regulatory Authority (URA) on 20 July 2022 regarding the new CEB's tariff application and review process. After consultations with members, the MCCI submitted a Memo to the URA to share the concerns of the private sector and its recommendations on the new tariffs.

Following the publication of the new regulations on 17 December 2022, MCCI engaged in further consultations with members and conducted a survey to assess the implications of the new tariffs, applicable as from 01 February 2023.

A paper was subsequently drafted and submitted to relevant authorities, to highlight the significant challenges that the local industry would be facing as a result of the hike in electricity prices and the spill over effects on the economy. In addition to the heightened risks to economic prospects, starting from a major spike in the overall cost of production to operational costs of enterprises across all sectors of the economy, the paper also emphasised on the risks of some businesses delocalising to more competitive markets and others facing business closure.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE



Over the past year, the MCCI continued its work with the Government and private sector operators to ensure the implementation of the various trade agreements. The MCCI worked closely with various Ministries and agencies to promote, defend the interests of its members on a wide range of trade policy issues, business facilitation initiatives and new trade regulations to ensure that the private sector interests were taken on board for various discussions.

An Inter-Ministerial Committee was set up for the monitoring and implementation of free trade agreements. Several meetings were held to look into the issues relating export of goods including shortage of labour in the manufacturing sector, better connectivity, strategy for boosting exports and attracting investments, sensitisation campaigns, SPS and standards issues, amongst others. Dedicated meetings to discuss the export of services were also held to identify support measures needed to boost export of services in key sectors such as ICT, financial services, education, and medical tourism amongst others. The MCCI was involved in the discussions and in the sectoral subcommittees set up to work on the identified challenges and promote the export of both goods and services.

1. Sub-Committee on FTAs

At the level of the MCCI, a Sub-Committee on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) was set up in 2022 to discuss matters relating to the implementation of FTAs and maximise on export opportunities under the different FTAs. An overview of all the signed free trade agreements and the export requirements was presented to members and issues linked to the implementation of the different FTAs were discussed in the Sub-Committee.

The focus was on the implementation of the existing and new trade agreements, which came into force in 2021 namely the FTA with China, the CECTPA with India and the UK-ESA EPA. The Sub-Committee discussed the need to sensitize operators, strengthening private sector collaboration with regional institutions and other international institutions as well as support measures needed to boost exports.

(a) African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

At the level of the African continent, the MCCI continued its work in the AfCTFA, SADC and COMESA region to ensure that issues relating to the implementation of the trade protocols such as the removal of non-tariffs barriers, improved rules of origin and trade facilitation issues were addressed.

The AFCFTA entered into force in 2021, is the world's largest free trade area bringing together the 55 countries of the African Union (AU) and 8 Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to boost the intra-Africa trade. The MCCI was actively involved in the discussions relating to the implementation of the AfCFTA with regular consultations held with Members on specific issues such as rules of origin.



The Secretary-General, Dr Youssef Ismaël (seated second from left), participated in the debates which took place at the National Awareness Workshop on the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA)

In July 2022, the AFCFTA Secretariat launched the AfCFTA Guided Trade Initiative (GTI) aiming to trigger commercially meaningful among seven countries including Rwanda, Cameroun, Egypt, Ghana, Kenya, Mauritius and Tanzania. The MCCI worked in close collaboration with Members and the International Trade Division and a first consignment under the AFCFTA consisting of printed of plastic labels was exported to Ghana under this initiative.

A two-day National Awareness workshop on AFCFTA themed “The Mauritian Strategy to leverage opportunities in the African Continental Free Trade Area” was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade on 09-10 November 2022. The Secretary General of the MCCI moderated a discussion panel themed “The challenges of Logistics and Connectivity”. The MCCI also participated in several high-level meetings to discuss business opportunities.



The Secretary-General, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, moderated a panel discussion on Logistics and Connectivity

The MCCI attended several online regional meetings aiming promoting trade in the SADC and COMESA region.

(b) SADC / COMESA

The second meeting of COMESA Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs) Regional Forum was held from 12 to 15 September 2022 in Malawi. Discussions were held in the progress of the implementation of COMESA Regulations on Elimination of Non-Tariff Barriers and the outstanding intra-COMESA NTBs to ensure free movement of good across the COMESA Member States.

The 6th SADC Industrialisation Week was held on 3 August 2022 and the MCCI was part of a panel discussion on the “Role of Business Associations in the implementation of the trade and industrialisation”. The advocacy role of the MCCI for the successful implementation of policy and regulations was discussed.

(c) Deepening of EU-ESA EPA

The Eastern and Southern African (ESA) and the EU started negotiations in 2019 to deepen the scope of the interim Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) which consists of five ESA states, namely Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles and Zimbabwe.

Over the past year, several internal ESA meetings and Joint Meetings with the EU were held to pursue discussions on the different areas of negotiation including the rules of origin, technical barriers to trade, trade in services, investment liberalisation, digital trade, intellectual property rights, public procurement and competition amongst others.

In 2022, as part of capacity building under the EPA, the MCCI attended the ‘Technical Assistance and Information Exchange Instrument’ Workshop held from 26-29 September 2022 with the support of the EU Commission. The workshop aimed to build capacity on the ‘Geographical Indications (GIs)’ and identify a list of potential Mauritian Products which could be eligible for protection under the GIs.



The focus was on the implementation of the existing and new trade agreements, which came into force in 2021 namely the FTA with China, the CECPA with India and the UK-ESA EPA. The Sub-Committee discussed the need to sensitize operators, strengthening private sector collaboration with regional institutions and other international institutions as well as support measures needed to boost exports.



(d) Mauritius-China FTA

The Mauritius-China FTA came into force in 2021 and comprises four main components namely trade in goods, trade in services, investment and economic cooperation. The MCCI has been working closely with the International Trade Division to address issues relating to the implementation of the FTA and maximize on the export opportunities in the Chinese market.

The MCCI also participated in the Mauritius-China Economic Cooperation Forum organised by the Economic Development Board (EDB) held on 7 December 2022 and organised in the context of the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Mauritius and China.

(e) CECPA with India

Following the entry force of the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement (CECPA) between Mauritius and India in 2021, Mauritian exporters benefit from trade preference in India on 615 tariff lines which include medical devices, frozen fish, specialty sugar, alcoholic drinks and soaps amongst others. In 2022, Mauritius exported medical devices and rum under CECPA.

The first session of India-Mauritius High Powered Joint Trade Committee was held from 01 to 03 August 2022 in India with representatives from the International Trade Division, the Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Development, MCCI, EDB, and other private sector institutions. Discussions were held, inter alia, on extension of preferential market access, automatic trigger safeguard mechanism, a framework for equivalence in certification and the movement of business professionals and skilled workers.

As part of the activities to promote trade under CECPA, the MCCI, in collaboration with the Mauritius High Commission in India also participated in several online private sector meetings with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) and other Indian private sector associations.

A CECPA forum was also organised in Mauritius by the Economic Development Board was organised in the margins of the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the establishment of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of India on 13 September 2022. It was an opportunity to showcase the business opportunities available under the agreement with a view to strengthen trade cooperation between both countries.

(f) Mauritius- Turkey FTA

A virtual meeting was held between Mauritius and Turkey on 26 July 2022 to consider Mauritius request list for additional market access under the Mauritius-Turkey FTA. The discussions were held in the context that Turkey has signed an FTA with UK in 2021 and aimed at improving the quota allocated to Mauritius in current FTA in terms of market access for products such as sugar, beer, ethyl alcohol, rum, pasta, sweet biscuits amongst others.

(g) Mauritius-Indonesia PTA

Following the launch of the negotiations for the setting up of a PTA between Mauritius and Indonesia in 2019, the third round of negotiations was held from 21 to 22 December 2022 in Mauritius. Discussions were held on the PTA main text, the Rules of Origin text, the modalities regarding market access and the preliminary request list of both countries. Consultation were held with members to identify the list of products of export interest.



Business Facilitation

The MCCI has been involved in various steering committees working on business facilitation aimed at simplifying the process and procedures for the issue of business permits and licences as well as resolving trade barriers.





(a) Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism (TOAM)



One of the major MCCI initiatives in terms of trade facilitation has been the Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism (TOAM) launched in 2015, which is an interactive e-platform designed by the International Trade Centre (ITC) to facilitate the reporting, monitoring and elimination of trade obstacles encountered by business operators. The platform allows for any registered trade operator to report a trade obstacle encountered when importing or exporting a product including delays in obtaining permits, delays in clearance of goods, restrictive measures relating to norms and standards, or other administrative hurdles.

Launching of mobile app

In 2022, the TOAM website was revamped with more user-friendly features and the new mobile application launched to simplify and facilitate the reporting of trade obstacles by the business community. An MoU was signed between ITC and the MCCI to promote the new TOAM platform and mobile application.

The launching ceremony took place at the Maritim Resort & Spa at Balaclava in the presence of Honourable Alan Ganoo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and the H.E Ms Charlotte Pierre, the British High Commissioner.



From left to right : Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI; Honourable Alan Ganoo; Her Excellency, Ms. Charlotte Pierre; Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI and Mr. Vianney Lesaffre from ITC.

Workshop

Several trainings and sensitization workshops were organized for government agencies and the private sector namely to the business community, freight forwarders and brokers. The TOAM platform ensures transparency, confidentiality and timely resolution of trade obstacles.



A workshop was held with the representatives of the public and private sectors on the occasion of the launch of the TOAM App.

Courtesy Visit of the Executive Director of ITC



From left to right : Mrs. Rooma Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, MCCI, Ms. Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director, ITC, Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President, MCCI, Mrs. Sarada Moothoosamy, Officer in Charge, MCCI

The Executive Director of the International Trade Centre, Pamela Coke-Hamilton, paid a courtesy visit to the President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, on 9 March 2023.

The objective of the visit was to discuss avenues for further collaboration between the MCCI and ITC.

Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton expressed her satisfaction regarding the work undertaken by MCCI for trade and business facilitation.

She specifically mentioned the TOAM (Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism) project which is being coordinated by the MCCI in Mauritius. The TOAM platform, developed in 2015 and revamped in 2022, provides a formal mechanism for the monitoring and resolution of trade obstacles through enhanced coordination between the public and private sectors.

She congratulated the MCCI for making this project a success in Mauritius and expressed the wish that Mauritius shares its experience and know-how with other countries in the region regarding this tool.

(b) SheTrades Hub**• Launching of SheTrades Mauritius Hub**

From left to right : Mrs. Kobita Jugnauth, Mr. Ken Poonosamy, CEO of the EDB, Ms Pamela Coke-Hamilton, Executive Director of International Trade Centre, and H.E, Mrs. Charlotte Pierre, British High Commissioner to Mauritius

The SheTrades Mauritius Hub was officially launched on 9 March 2023 at Le Meridien Hotel and Resorts, Pointe aux Piments.

The SheTrades Mauritius Hub aims to support women entrepreneurs through building sector-specific skills and increasing their access to international markets. Through the various components of the She- Trades programme, women entrepreneurs can register themselves on a platform to network with other businesspeople around the world.

The project is being coordinated by the Economic Development Board (EDB) of Mauritius, in collaboration with the International Trade Centre (ITC) and the UK Government.

The MCCI participated in the working group on SheTrades Outlook.

Mrs Kobita Jugnauth graced the event as Chief Guest.

• Panel on 'Women and Trade in Goods: Expanding the Global Footprint of Mauritian women Entrepreneurs'

The President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, chaired a panel on 'Women and Trade in goods' organized in the context of the launch of SheTrades Hub. Discussions focused on the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and on the opportunities which can be exploited at regional and international levels.



From left to right : Sharon Ramdenee, Chief Executive Officer of Agiliss, Sharanz Subratty, Managing Director at Casting world, Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, MCCI President, Jaqueline Sauzier, General Secretary of the Mauritius Chamber of Agriculture.

(c) Collaboration with Association Professionnelle des Transitaires

During 2022, the MCCI continued its collaboration with the Association Professionnelle des Transitaires (APT) by providing secretariat services to the Association and has been responsible of all the administrative task. The MCCI has been working closely with the APT on several issues of common interest to both organisations including the proposed recommendations to the Budget proposal 2022/2023 and representations to government agencies regarding specific issues related to the freight sector.



An information session on TOAM was held at the MCCI on 22 October 2022 with members of APT.

(d) Workshop on the Development of an Integrated Waste Management Legislative Framework

The MCCI participated in the drafting of the Integrated Waste Management (Solid and Hazardous Waste) Act to be implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change and was part of the Validation Workshop on the Development of an Integrated Waste Management Legislative Framework that took place on 18 May 2022 at the Caudan Arts Centre.

(e) UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and Government of Mauritius New Cooperation Framework

The MCCI participated in a consultative workshop hosted by the UN Resident Coordinator Office, which was conducted at the Labourdonnais Hotel in Port Louis from 13 to 16 December 2022. The workshop was an activity designed to raise awareness among key stakeholders in the country regarding the principal action and instruments to be employed in the development of the Cooperation Framework, and to ascertain the main constraints and emerging areas of opportunity for the success towards the achievement of the SDGs in Mauritius.

(f) Workshop on Supporting Local Businesses in Solar Innovations

The MCCI in collaboration with the British High Commission in Mauritius hosted a one-day event titled "Supporting Local Businesses in Solar Innovations". The Conference was organised on Wednesday, 5 October 2022, at the Westin Turtle Bay Resort & Spa, Balaclava.

The event featured an opening ceremony with the participation of the Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives, Honourable Sunil Bholah, the British High Commissioner, Ms. Charlotte Pierre as well as other public and private stakeholders.



From left to right : H.E, Ms Charlotte Pierre; the Honourable Soomilduth Bholah; Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardwar, President of the MCCI and Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI

(g) Sensitization Workshop: Leveraging private sector engagement in implementing the 8th UNDP and achieving the SDGs in Zambia, under the Theme 'Accelerating the recovery from the COVID-19 and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels.'

The MCCI participated in a 2-day Workshop on 1 & 2 December 2022 organized by the UN Economic Commission for Africa Subregional office for Southern Africa, under the aegis of the Ministry of Finance and National Planning, Zambia and in collaboration with the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the United Nations Development Programme. The MCCI presented and shared experiences from Mauritius on the role of private sector in implementing national development and achieving SDGs.

(h) Regional Technical Committee: Enhancing Maritime Connectivity Programme

The MCCI participated in a technical session organised by the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) Secretariat and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 12-13 September 2022. The main objectives of the session were to raise awareness amongst countries on the need to restructure port management structures and decision making and also create a better understanding of the requirements on improvement and trade facilitation and to establish a system that regularly monitors trade in the region focusing on quantifying the region's needs in terms of maritime transport on the basis of current and projected trade volumes.

(i) National Consultations on "Stockholm+50: a healthy planet for the prosperity of all – our responsibility, our opportunity"

The MCCI participated in a national consultations workshop on 28 April 2022, organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Country Office at the Caudan Arts Centre. The objective of the National Consultation was to take stock of the outcomes of focused consultations held and to stimulate further reflections on the three leadership dialogues of Stockholm+50. A draft National Consultation Report on the three leadership dialogues was subsequently submitted to the Stockholm+50.

(j) 2022 Star Scholars Conference

The MCCI sponsored and participated in the 2022 Star Scholars Conference on 7-8 December 2022 at the Sugar Beach Hotel, Wolmar, Flic en Flac. The Conference was jointly organised by the University of Mauritius and the US STAR Scholars Network under the theme 'Charting the Way Towards the Knowledge Economy and Society'. It provided reflections on ways and means countries can develop regulatory systems and policies, a sound ecosystem and infrastructure and concrete actions for innovation to thrive.

(k) Visioning Exercise for the Preparation of the UNDP Country Programme Document (2024-2028)

Following the conclusion of the UN Strategic Partnership Framework in December 2023, the MCCI participated in a 2-day visioning exercise on 17-18 October 2022, organised by the UNDP at The Ravenala Attitude Hotel, Balaclava, in preparation of the next Country Programme (2024-2028). The exercise drew extensive participation of representatives from Government, private sector, Civil Society and Development Partners to shape the direction of the next programme, facilitated by the UNDP Global Policy Network.

(l) Private sector dialogue on Pro-Employment policies and Strategies

A meeting on Private Sector Dialogue on Pro-Employment Policies and Strategies was held 11- 12 April 2022 in Lilongwe, Malawi. The dialogue was aimed at facilitating knowledge and consensus sharing on core priorities to foster inclusive and sustainable economic and social growth. The dialogue with the private sector, which was jointly organised by the SADC Secretariat and the SADC Business Council, set out to advocate for policies and strategies that promote employment and to seek out opportunities for the private sector to play a greater role in job creation in SADC.

(m) Launch of Business Intelligence Platform

The Business Intelligence (BI) Platform, a unified dashboard containing compiled data from official sources, has been launched on 1 March 2023.

The BI Platform, a joint MCCI-UNDP initiative, aims at serving as a foundation for Mauritian importers and exporters and assists them in identifying opportunities in the global market.

This platform is part of a pilot project undertaken with the technical and financial support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). It provides a central repository of statistics that can be quickly analysed and queried to generate relevant insights for effective decision-making. The pilot project targets not only MCCI members but the whole business community, including SMEs and local entrepreneurs as well as Government entities.

The event was held at the MCCI Conference Room, in the presence of Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardowar, President of the MCCI, Ms Amanda Serumaga, UNDP Resident Representative for Mauritius and Seychelles and of representatives of public organisations.



From left to right : Mr Anwar Kaidoo, Operations Manager MCCI, Mr Saravanan Anben Mauree, Assistant Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection, Mrs. Vichitra Purdassee, Project Manager, UNDP, Mrs. Rooksana Moraby, Ag. Deputy Director of Statistics, Statistics Mauritius, Mrs Rooma Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, MCCI, Ms Amanda Serumaga, Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardowar, Mrs Sarada Moothoosamy, Officer in Charge & Head of Finance & Management, MCCI, Mr. Geerish Bucktowonsing, Director Industry, Economic Development Board, Ms Rushaa Badaloo & Mrs Diya Jaunky, Analysts MCCI, Mrs Nishta Surajbali-Servansingh, Economist, MCCI and Mr Rajeev Pydayya, Analyst (Trade), Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection.

Online Workshops / Meetings Attended:



12 April 2022

Workshop on the digital platform – the African Trade Observatory

31 May 2022

Presentation for validation workshop for development of Mutual Recognition Framework for pre-packaged foods in COMESA region

9 June 2022

Development of Anti-Illicit Trade Framework for COMESA region

31 August 2022

Tobacco Workgroup



09-12 May 2022

Committee on Trade in Services held virtually

15 August 2022

Validation workshop – Technical Regulations

26-29 September 2022

Trade and Trade Facilitation virtual sub-committee



31 March 2022

Validation workshop on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBTs) of wine products in SADC Region

31 March 2022

Validation workshop on SADC MS Conformity Assessment Regimes

04-06 May 2022

Webinar on Business opportunities – SADC Trade in Services

27 January 2023

SADC Business Council AfCFTA Private sector stakeholder consultation



22-23 March 2022

Intellectual Property and Innovation-
Boosting competitiveness in the
AfCFTA

11 August 2022

Workshop on the drafting of the AfCFTA
Rules of Origin Manual

Regional stakeholder consultation on
digital trade

07 and 08 September 2022

AfCFTA Conference on the Challenges
and Opportunities

Other Virtual

Workshops attended:

04 April 2022

COMESA Competition Commission
Investigations into Price
Announcements by Shipping
Companies operating in the Common
market

20 April 2022

Virtual validation session –
Manufacturing 4.0 in the
commonwealth – Digital industrial
transformation for policymakers

22 April 2022

Virtual Workshop on Circular Economy
and Imperatives for Trade – Standards
Approach

25-26 April 2022

National workshop on the WTO
Agreement on Agriculture

05-06 July 2022

CII Indo Pacific Business Summit

3-4 August 2022

Regional Technical Committee –
Enhancing Maritime Connectivity
Programme

01 February 2023

12th Tranche webinar – Harnessing the
potential of Special Economic Zones
for Private Sector Development and
Inclusive Industrialisation in Southern
Africa





MARC

Since its inception, MARC has always strived to promote arbitration and mediation at local, regional and international levels.

MARC



The Permanent Secretariat of MARC is responsible for maintaining state-of-the-art case management and procedures at the centre and promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution nationally, regionally and internationally through the organisation of training programmes, promotional events and activities, and through international cooperation with other ADR centres and stakeholders.

During the year, MARC focused on the following activities:

1. E-visibility: MARC's new website will be launched in April 2023.

It is a more user centric website with ease to navigate through. It has new features such as a mediation and arbitration fee calculator, statistics of the centre since 2014, the possibility for parties to book for training/events and the MARC facilities online, Testimonials of arbitrators about their experience at MARC and live updates of events being hosted by MARC.

2. Organisation of workshop

Democratization of the use for ADR: A workshop on Commercial Mediation was on the 24 January 2023. The key objective behind these types of workshops is to sensitize directors and management professionals about the advantages of mediation for resolving their disputes and promote MARC as the go-to dispute resolution centre in the region.



From left to right : Me Alexis Merle, Registrar of MARC, Me Narghis Bundhun SC, Mr. Guillaume Hugnin, Chairman of the MARC et Mr. Thierry Ollivry, Certified Professional Mediator.

3. Signing of a Cooperation Agreement

The International Dispute Resolution and Risk Management Institute (IDRRMI) and MARC signed a Collaboration Agreement on the 17 October 2022. The agreement focuses on capacity-building and promotional activities to foster a better commercial environment and international dispute-resolution mechanism between China, Mauritius, Hong Kong SAR, Asia Pacific and Africa.

4. IORA project

IORA and MCCI/MARC kickstarted the project with the aim to create an IORA Centre of Excellence for Dispute Resolution in order to facilitate best practice exchange and pooling of resources and information in the area of alternative dispute resolution.

A Comparative Study aimed at an in-depth analysis of the main mechanisms for dispute resolution through arbitration and mediation has been commissioned with the objective of determining the modalities for establishing such a Centre based on the global best practices.

The findings of the Study will be presented at a symposium to be held by June 2023.

5. Africa Arbitration Awards 2022

The Registrar of MARC, Mr Alexis Merle, was appointed as 'Nomination Judge' for the categories 'Leading Case Counsel Team', and 'Leading Case Service Provider' in the Africa Arbitration Awards 2022. This prestigious event regrouping international arbitration experts was held in Kigali, Rwanda, on Friday the 17 June 2022.



From left to right : Prof. Ike Ehiribe, Mr Alexis Merle Dr. Kariuki Muiga

6. The East Africa International Conference

The MARC Registrar attended the East Africa International Arbitration Conference 2022 (EAIAC) which took place in Kigali, Rwanda from the 16th to the 17th of June 2022.

The EAIAC Conference was a great opportunity to promote the MARC to world renowned arbitration practitioners. Discussions were held with representatives of AfricaArb and I-Arb for future collaborations in trainings/conferences/events/seminars.

Following the event, the Secretariat received several applications from arbitrators to be registered on the internal database of arbitrators.



A woman wearing a straw hat with a black band, a white long-sleeved shirt, and a yellow skirt is standing in a store, looking at several woven baskets displayed on wooden shelves. The baskets have different patterns, including black and white zig-zag and solid colors like red and yellow. The background is a warm, orange-toned wall.

Tax Refund Service

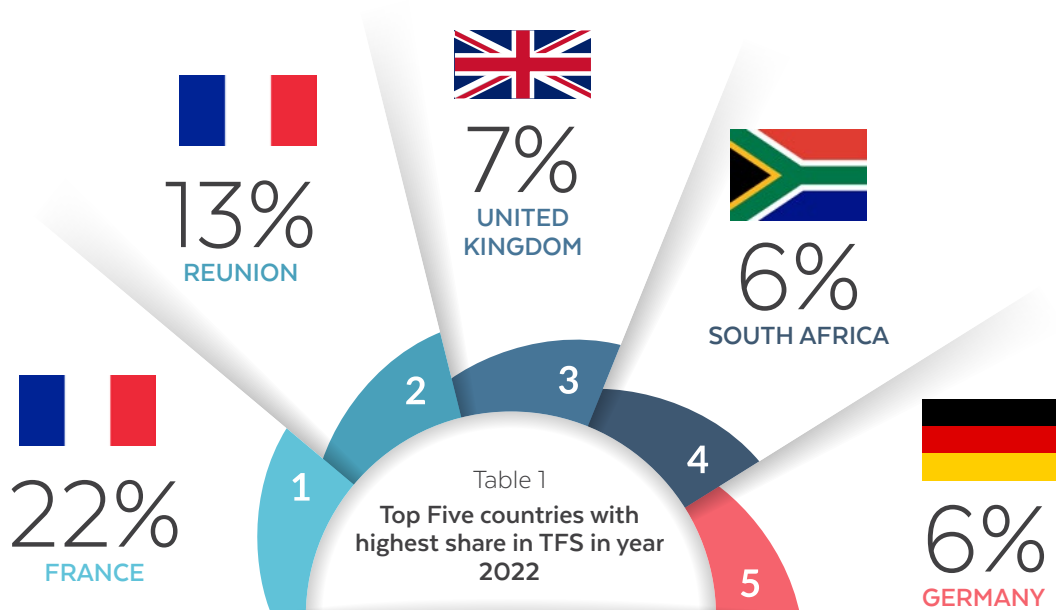
After two extremely difficult years due to the Covid-19 pandemic, MCCI Tax Refund Counter recovered 60% of its annual number of transactions in 2022 compared to the pre-pandemic years. Moreover, the electronic Tax Refund System (eTRS) is fully operational, being inter-connected with MRA and Shop Operators, contributes immensely to an enhanced tax free shopping experience for Visitors as well as to all stakeholders.

Tax Refund Service

1. Operations at the Airport

With close to a million tourist arrivals in 2022, MCCI Tax Refund counter registered a fourfold increase in number of transactions compared to 2021, as countries around the world removed all travel restrictions.

Nearly 30,000 passengers from more than 180 nationalities were serviced at the MCCI Counter in 2022, representing around 60% of the number of passengers serviced during the pre-pandemic years. For a sixth successive year, French tourists have the highest share in tax free shopping. French tourists maintained their top position (22%) with the second place remaining to Reunion (13%) and United Kingdom claiming the third place (7%). South Africa is now ranked at the 4th place (6%) whilst Germany overtook India for 5th place with the latter losing its place in the Top Five countries.



2. Operations at the Port

Operations at the Port resumed in October 2022 but the number of transactions on board cruise ships MCCI processed was quite low.



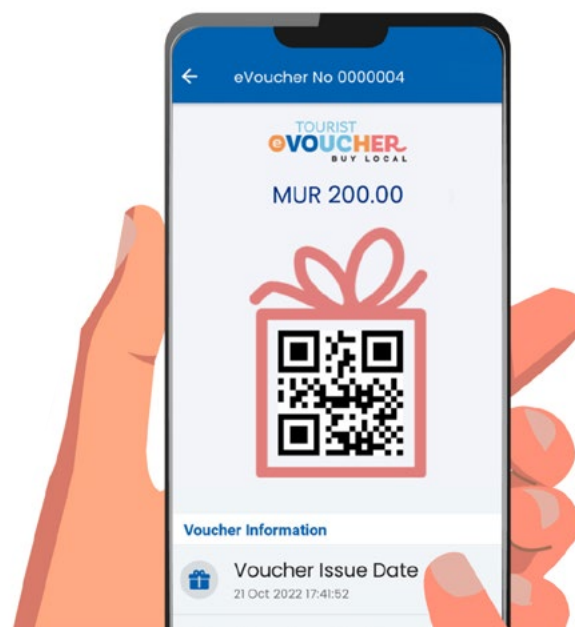
3. Refund on Credit Card

Refund on credit card is now possible both at the airport and port, despite various technical challenges in the implementation process. Refunds on credit card could allow MCCI dealing with shortages of foreign currencies in the coming years.

4. Voucher Scheme

MCCI is currently at an advanced stage in the implementation of the electronic Voucher (eVoucher) via the Visitor Mobile App. The Visitor will be able to generate and redeem his/her eVoucher in registered point of sales through the App itself. Enhancements requested from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and Development (MOFEPD) to allow a Visitor to redeem eVouchers for any number of trips without any restriction have already been implemented is expected be launched in early 2023 after further rigorous testing.

The MCCI has been working on the branding and a dedicated logo for the eVoucher with the assistance of a Marketing Agency. This logo will be used as the identifier for the eVoucher and will enable Visitors to easily recognise registered points of sales as well as eligible products.

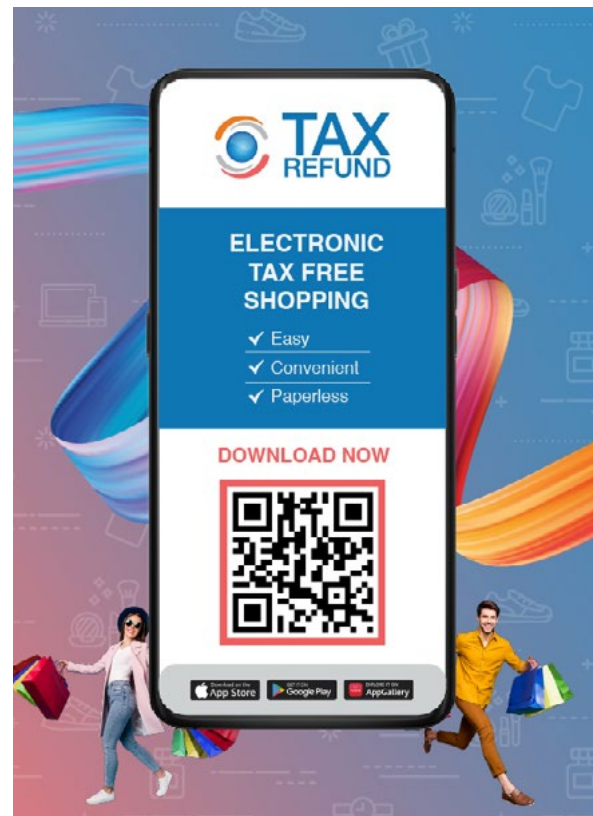
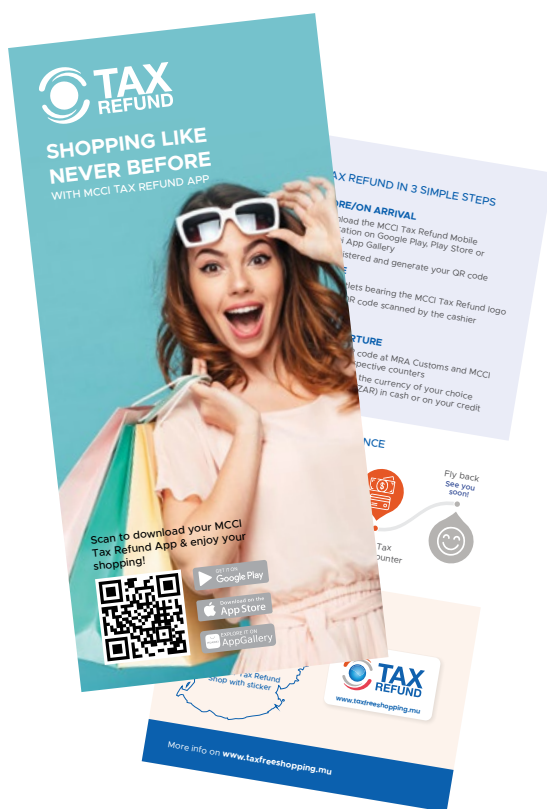


5. Marketing and Outreach

Despite several challenges to fully launch a proper Marketing Campaign in year 2022, the following activities have been implemented:

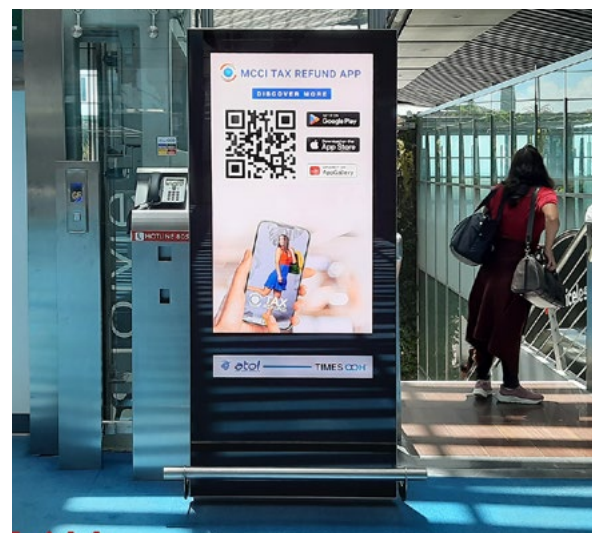
(a) Distribution of flyers

Flyers are available at Arrival at the airport to inform Visitors of Tax free Shopping opportunities in Mauritius



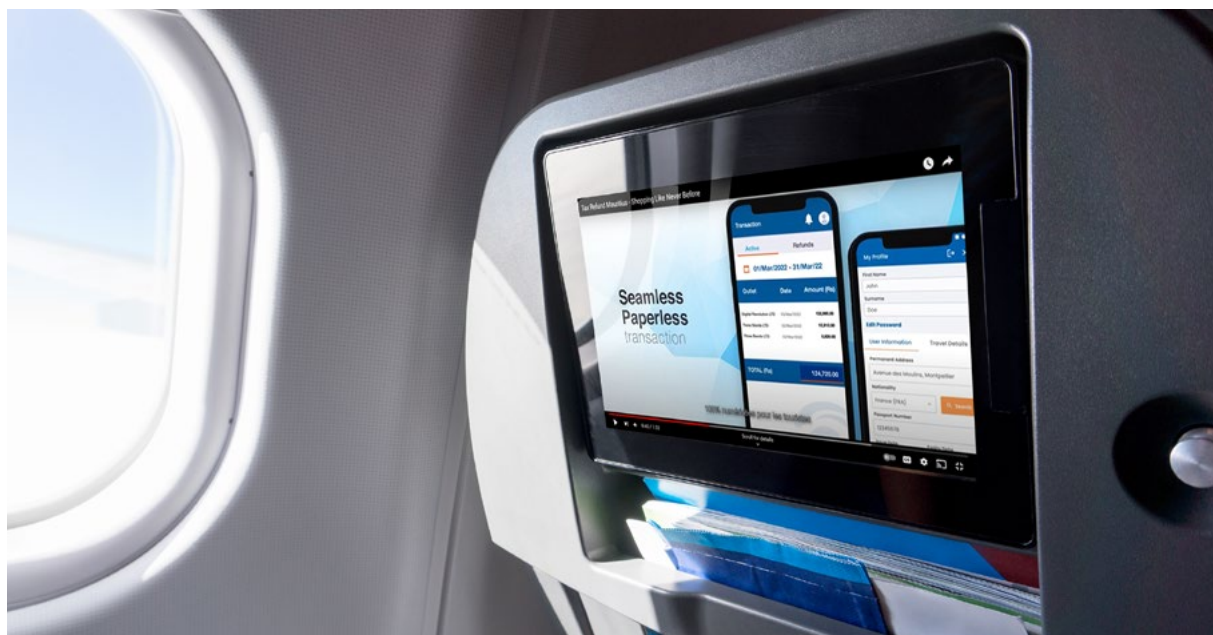
(b) Promotion of the App to all passengers

Campaign launched in October 2022 at the SSR Airport arrival & departure whereby eTRS is being promoted to both incoming and outbound tourists for sensitising about Tax Free Shopping, to prompt for the download of the visitor App and for proper steps to claim tax refund at the airport upon departure.



(c) Production of Inflight video for streaming on airlines' entertainment systems.

Since January 2023, the video campaign has kicked off on Air Mauritius for a duration of one year. It is expected to extend the campaign to other airlines.



(d) Increase in the number of shops enrolled

51% of shops are enrolled on Shop Portal for online processing of transactions as at 31 December 2022 after intensive outreach campaigns, information sessions as well training session with shop operators.

The MCCI has been able to increase the number shops in the Tax Refund network despite the closure of a hundred shops during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

Prospects

With further integration of shops in the system for online and seamless transactions in 2023 we can expect further digitalisation of the Tax Free Shopping system. This together with the launching of the eVoucher will also contribute to an increase in tourism spending thereby boosting the economy with a multiplier effect.

With the electronic Tax Refund System (eTRS), a first in Africa, Visitors can expect a safe and secure travel experience whilst enjoying a delightful shopping and tax refund experience. A massive Marketing campaign is being conducted to enhance Tax free Shopping in Mauritius.



During the year, it has further consolidated its services and has provided consultancy services in various fields namely control inventory and traceability in various sectors ranging from fresh foods, consumer packaged goods, general merchandise, distribution and logistics to healthcare.

1. MEMA (Middle East, Mediterranean, Africa) Regional Forum

Year 2022 has also been marked by the organization of a major regional event in Mauritius, namely GS 1 MEMA (Middle East, Mediterranean, Africa) Regional Forum. The GS1 MEMA Regional Forum is an event organized on a rotating basis in a member country by GS1 Global in collaboration with the MO (Member organization) of the host country. The 2022 edition was held in a hybrid format.

The regional Forum was also an opportunity for MO leaders and professionals to share best-practices, exchange insights, develop networks, address the latest business issues affecting their communities and learn about new areas of innovation.

The MEMA Regional Forum was officially launched by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Mauritius, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth who was the Guest of Honour. The Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Hon. Alan Ganoo, was also present on this occasion.

The function was also attended by some 20 high officials of GS1 Member Organisations from the MEMA region, stakeholders from the private sector and government officials.



The Prime Minister, Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, posed for a group photo with delegates of MEMA Regional Forum.

First row, from Left to right: Mr. Guillaume Hugnin (MCCI Past President), Mr. Charles Harel (MCCI Vice President), The Hon. Alan Ganoo, Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar (MCCI President) (6th from left to right), The Hon. Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, Mr Renaud de Barbuat (President and Chief Executive Officer of the GS1 Global Office), Mr Eric Corson (President of GS1 Mauritius) and other high officials of GS1 Member Organisations from the MEMA region.

Objectives

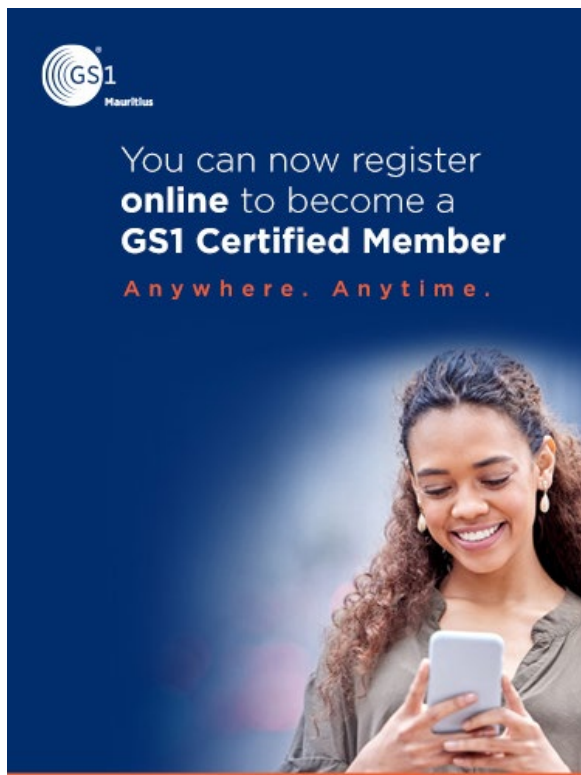
The objectives of the Regional Forum are to review and approve the region's strategic plan, to provide Training and Capacity building sessions according to the region's request and expectations and to develop and consolidate ties among members of the business communities.

This MEMA 2022 Regional Forum has allowed GS1 Member Organisations to meet and discuss about the status of regional projects and how to address challenges specific to the region.

During the business day, a presentation on the Business Opportunities in the Healthcare sector in Mauritius was made by GS1 Mauritius.

2. Online Membership Application linked to an internal CRM.

GS1 Mauritius is now closer to its members. GS1 Mauritius has launched a comprehensive Electronic CRM Platform. The platform will be used to replace the existing traditional system for the input, processing, updating and modification of customers' records throughout their lifecycle. Eventually, this will lead to a paperless approach as an online application membership has been introduced along.



3. Collaboration with the public authorities

GS1 Mauritius pursues its close collaboration after renewal of the MOUs with the Small Farmers Welfare Fund (SFWF) and SME Mauritius Ltd respectively. These institutions provide financial schemes to encourage eligible MSMEs and agro-processors to increase the adoption and implementation of GS1 Barcodes and Standards, to further contribute to the economic development of Mauritius and Rodrigues.

GS1 Mauritius also participated in the World Food Day organised by the Small Farmers Welfare Fund on the 16 October 2022 in Saint-Pierre.

4. Participation in various international fora

Representatives of GS1 Mauritius participated in various international seminars and events organized by GS1 Global, including the Annual General Meeting of GS1 held in May 2022 in a hybrid format.



Regional and International networking

One of the major role of the MCCI is to foster business-to-business relationships through networking events throughout the year. Several networking events were organized during the year. The MCCI is also very much committed to business community partnerships with foreign business people. The MCCI also participated in various business meets, both locally and abroad, to promote trade and investment between Mauritius and foreign countries.

1. Signature of MoUs

Indian Business Council

The Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) and the Indian Business Council (IBC) signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 8 August 2022.

The agreement aims at developing reciprocal cooperation between the two entities with a view of improving the business environment between Mauritius and India.



From left to right : Sridhar Nagarajan, member of the Mauritius-India Joint Business Council; Amit Gupta, member of the IBC, Kevin Ramkaloan, Chief Executive Officer of Business Mauritius; Radha Gopaul, member of the IBC; Azim Currimjee, President of the Mauritius-India Joint Business Council ; Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI; Vimarsh Aryan, Deputy High Commissioner of India; Dr Suresh Nanda, Secretary of the IBC ; Jayasankar Seshadri, member of the IBC ; Hemraj Ramnial, President of the EDB ; and Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI.



Iran CCI and Shiraz Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture

The Secretary-General of the MCCI, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, and his counterpart from Shiraz Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, Mr Ali Avazpour, signed a Memorandum of Understanding during a prospective mission in Iran, in August 2022 .

The mission was organized by the Economic Development Board of Mauritius from the 11 to 21 August 2022.

The objectives of the MoU are to consolidate ties between the business communities of both countries.

Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Côte d'Ivoire (CCICI)

An agreement was signed between the MCCI and the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Côte d'Ivoire (CCICI), on 27 October 2022. The signature ceremony took place during "Les Journées Ivoiriennes", a two-day event organised by the Embassy of the Ivory Coast, based in South Africa. It was themed: "Côte d'Ivoire – Maurice: Tisser des partenariats novateurs pour une croissance partagée." / "Ivory Coast – Mauritius: Forging innovative partnerships for shared growth."

This MoU set the base for the two institutions to encourage, develop and promote all forms of collaboration in relation to economic activities and investment, in their respective countries.



From left to right : His Excellency Ambassador Mr Sakaria Kone; His Excellency Ambassador Mr Haymandoyal Dillum, President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie de Côte d'Ivoire, Mr Faman Toure; and the minister of Tourism of Ivory Coast, Honorable Siandou Fofana

2. Events

1. Forum Économique des îles de l'Océan Indien (FEIOI) 2022



The 13th edition of the Forum Économique des Îles de l'océan Indien (FEIOI) was held at the Caudan Arts Centre, Port-Louis, from 11 to 13 October 2022. This regional event was co-organised by the Mauritius Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) and Cap Business océan Indien, with the support of the "Agence Française de Développement" (AFD), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, the Economic Development Board, the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority and the Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie France-Maurice.

Some 225 participants, comprising members of the business community, government officials and representatives of regional and international organisations gathered for the event.

• Opening Ceremony

The FEIOI was launched by the Minister of Transport and Light Rail and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Honourable Alan Ganoo. The opening ceremony was also attended by the Minister of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change, Honourable Kavydass Ramano, Mrs Patricia Aubras, regional director (Indian Ocean) of the AFD, members of the Diplomatic Corps, high-government officials and captains of industry from the region.

The President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardowar and the President of Cap Business Océan Indien, Mrs Joséphine Andriamamonjariason, respectively highlighted the importance of regional cooperation in their speeches as well as the need to further collaborate in a wide range of sectors to promote trade and investment in the region.



From left to right : Mr Charles Harel, Vice-President of the MCCI; Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI; Hon. Alan Ganoo, Hon. Kavydass Ramano, Ms Joséphine Andriamamonjariason and Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI

• The programme

Over the three days, some 12 panel discussions and round tables were organised on cross-cutting issues and key sectors in the context of post-COVID-19 recovery and the repercussions of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict.



Key themes included the blue economy, regional cooperation and finance solutions and prospects in the Indian Ocean region.

Moreover, on each day, three hours were dedicated to the climate change challenge, whereby participants had the opportunity to attend workshops hosted by the “Fresque du Climat” association.

• B2B meetings

Around 100 B2B meetings were held during the event.



Sponsors

The following companies sponsored the event:



• Closing ceremony

A closing ceremony was held at the Ravenala Attitude Hotel, BalACLava, on the evening of the 13 October 2022. It was marked by the remittance of prizes to the winner of the support program entitled “Doing business in sustainable tourism and the blue economy in the Indian Ocean”. The winners are from Koko Expériences, a cooperative society that co-creates and distributes community-based tourism experiences for trippers and tourists in Mayotte.

The 14th edition of the FEIOI will take place in Mayotte.



The President of the MCCI, Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardwar passing the torch to the Chamber of Commerce of Mayotte.

• Way forward

The recommendations at the FEIOI 2022 will pave the way for an action plan to be discussed at the level of Cap Business océan Indien.

3. Business Meet with the Small Enterprise Development Agency (South Africa)

A Business Meet with the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA) of South Africa, organised by the High Commission of South Africa in Mauritius, in collaboration with the MCCI, the Economic Development Board (EDB), was organised on 18 October 2022.

The delegation from the SEDA, led by Mr Ambrose Makgwale, included twenty women entrepreneurs from micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Some twenty local companies were present at the Business Meet which aimed at promoting trade and investment between Mauritius and the South Africa.



From left to right : Dr. Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General, MCCI, Mrs Nirmla Jeetah, Director, EDB, Her Excellency Dr Hlamalani Nelly Manzini, High Commissioner of South Africa, Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardowar, President, MCCI, Mrs Rima Ramsaran, President, AMFCE and Mr Ambrose Makgwale

4. Mauritius-Egypt Business meet

A Mauritius-Egypt business meet was organized by the Engineering Export Council of Egypt (EEC) in collaboration with the Embassy of Egypt and the MCCI on 5 December 2022 at the Hennessy Park Hotel. The event aimed at developing markets for Egyptian products in various sectors such as Home Appliances, Electric & Electronic industry and automotive industry.

Around 60 business persons, both from Mauritius and Egypt, attended the event.



From left to right : Ms Nouran Aly, Chargée d'Affaires of the Embassy of Egypt; Hon Alan Ganoo, Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade; Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI; Dr. May Helmy, head of the delegation from Egypt; Hon Soomilduth Bhalah, Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI; Arvind Radhakrishna, Strategic Advisor, EDB, Hemraj Ramnial, Chairman of EDB and a representative of the Egyptian delegation.

4. Courtesy visits

Ambassador of Israel

The Ambassador of Israel to Mauritius, His Excellency (H.E) Mr Eliav Belotsercovsky, paid a courtesy visit to the President and Secretary-General of the MCCI on 6 July 2022.



From left to right : Mr Keeshorlal Gungah, Honorary Consul of Israel in Mauritius, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, the Secretary-General, His Excellency Eliav Belotsercovsky, the Ambassador of the State of Israel to Mauritius, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI and Mr Guillaume Hugnin, immediate past president.



President of the Union des Chambres de commerce, d'Industrie et d'Agriculture des Comores

The President and the Secretary-General of the Union des Chambres de Commerce, d'Industrie et d'Agriculture des Comores (UCCIA), Mr Chamsouddine Ahmed and Mr Ahmed Koudra, respectively, visited the MCCI on 27 July 2022.



From left to right : Mrs. Rooma Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, MCCI, Mrs. Ruth Mbennah, Ambassador's Spouse; H.E. Prof. Emmanuel Mbennah, High Commissioner to Mauritius; Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI; Mr. Marday Venketasamy and Mrs. Gwantwa Mwaisaka, Head of Chancery.

Courtesy visit of the High Commissioner of the Republic of Tanzania

The Ambassador to Zimbabwe & High Commissioner to Mauritius of the United Republic of Tanzania, H.E. Prof. Emmanuel Mbennah, paid a courtesy call on the President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar on 19 August 2022.

The Ambassador was accompanied by Mr. Marday Venketasamy, G.O.S.K, Hon. Consul of Tanzania to Mauritius.

Trade, investment and the consolidation of private sector relations between both countries were among the topics discussed.



From left to right : Mr Charles Harel; Dr Yousouf Ismaël; Mr Marday Venkatasamy; Her Excellency Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe; Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar; Dr. Dev Anand Haman, Assistant Secretary-General in charge of Administration and Finance (COMESA); Ms Maluba Sikopo Sinyamba, Executive Support Officer (COMESA); Ms Kreshma Aubeeluck, Analyst (Cooperation), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade; Mr Charles Chaitezvi, Trade Facilitation Programme Team Leader (COMESA); and Mrs Rooma Pillay-Narrainen, Head of Advocacy at the MCCI

Secretary-General of COMESA

The Secretary-General of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), H.E, Chileshe Mpundu Kapwepwe, had a working session with Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, Mr. Charles Harel and Dr Yousouf Ismaël, President, Vice-President and Secretary-General of the MCCI respectively on Tuesday 23 August 2022.

The President of the COMESA Business Council, Mr Marday Venkatasamy, G.O.S.K., also attended the meeting.

Courtesy visit of the High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Mauritius

The High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Mauritius, H.E Mr Muhammad Arshad Jan Pathan paid a courtesy call on the President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, on 4 November 2022.

Discussions focused on the third edition of the Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition to be held in South Africa from 29 November 2022 to 1 December 2022.



The High Commissioner of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan to Mauritius, His Excellency Mr. Muhammad Arshad Jan Pathan paid a courtesy visit to the President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, on Friday 4 November 2022

4. Courtesy visits (cont'd)



From left to right : Dr Yousouf Ismaël, Secretary-General of the MCCI; His Excellency Mr. Constant-Serge Bounda, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo to Mauritius; Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, President of the MCCI and Mrs Maryse Carmelle Bounda

The Ambassador of the Republic of Congo

H.E Constant-Serge BOUNDA, Ambassador of the Republic of Congo to Mauritius, with residence in Maputo, Mozambique, paid a courtesy call on the President and Secretary-General of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar and Dr Yousouf Ismaël respectively, on 15 November 2022.

The main objectives of the visit consisted of discussing avenues of collaboration between both countries, particularly with regards to trade relations, through more exchanges and interactions between the business communities of both countries.

The Ambassador of Serbia

H.E. Mr. Goran Vujcic paid a courtesy visit to the MCCI on 1 December 2022.

Ms Faeza Ibrahimsah, Manager, Communications and International Cooperation, MCCI and H.E Mr. Goran Vujcic, Ambassador of the Republic of Serbia to Mauritius.



Representatives of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, met with Mr. Stephen Thomsen, Head of Investment Policy Reviews and Ms. Froukje Boele, Head of Public Policy & Regional Programmes, of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on 26 January 2023.

The objective of the meeting was to discuss on the process for the Investment Policy Review of Mauritius which will be carried out by the OECD team in the context of the objective of the Government of Mauritius to seek adherence to the OECD's Investment Declaration.



From left to right : Mrs Rooma Narrainen, Head of Advocacy, MCCI, Mr. Stephen Thomsen, Mrs Namita Jagarnath-Hardowar, Ms Froukie Boele and Mrs Sarada Moothoosamy, Officer-in-Charge and Head of Finance and Management, MCCI.

5. Outgoing missions

Iran

The Secretary-General, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, formed part of a prospection mission to Iran organised from the 11 to 22 August 2022 by the Economic Development Board Mauritius (EDB) in collaboration with Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius. The objectives of the mission were to develop avenues of cooperation between the business people of both countries.



The Secretary-General of the MCCI, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, and his counterpart from Iran Chamber of Commerce, Industries, Mines and Agriculture, Mr Mojtaba Modares-Zadeh exchanging gifts during the signing ceremony of an MoU between both organisations.

Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference



The President of the MCCI, Mrs Namita Jagarnath Hardowar, participated at the third edition of the Pakistan-Africa Trade Development Conference and Single Country Exhibition from 29 November to 1 December 2022 in Johannesburg, South Africa. The objectives of the event were to promote Pakistani products within the SADC countries.

Around 130 companies from Pakistan and from the SADC countries exhibited their products in the fair.

6. Membership of international private sector organisations

(a) Africa Business Council



The Africa Business Council is the platform for cooperation among Business Associations and Chambers of Commerce in Africa, with a view to advocating business interests through dialogues with the African Union.

The objectives of the Africa Business Council are to promote trade and investment amongst the African private sector, and also between Africa and the rest of the world.

During the year, the AfBC has been very active in promoting the organization as THE advocacy platform for the private sector in Africa. Several activities were also conducted to promote the benefits of the AfCFTA.

(i) Participation at the USA-Africa Leaders' Summit 2022

The Chairperson and Vice-President of the AFBC, Dr Amany Asfour (6th from right to left) and Mr. Marday Venkatasamy (1st on the right) respectively, as well as Board Members of the Africa Business Council attended the United States-Africa Leaders' Summit 2022 held in Washington DC from 13-15 December 2022. The summit was hosted by United States President Joe Biden, and attended by leaders from 49 African states, as well as the head of the African Union Commission.

The event's overall goal was to rebuild and strengthen relations between the United States and African countries.



A High Level Panel on increasing US Africa Private Sector collaboration for Investment and Trade in Africa was held at the African Union Mission in Washington in the presence of H.E. Amb. Albert Muchanga African Union Commissioner for Trade Industry Economic Development Mining and Tourism.

(ii) Lighting the Africa Trade Torch for the implementation of AfCFTA



The Africa Trade Torch Lighting ceremony took place in the presence of board members of the CBC

A Lighting the Africa Trade Torch event was organised by the Africa Business Council (AfBC), in collaboration with regional private sector organisations including the COMESA Business Council (CBC) and the Federation of West African Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The commemoration was held in Zambia, on Wednesday 18 January 2023.

This initiative aims at promoting the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) among the African people and the African Private Sector.

The official opening ceremony was carried out by the President of the AfBC, Dr Amany Asfour. She was accompanied by the Vice-President (AfBC), Mr. Marday Venkatasamy, who is also the President of the COMESA Business Council (CBC).

Through this commemoration, the relevance and core existence of the AfBC in promoting private sector cooperation and engagement at the African continental level were highlighted.

The function was attended by representatives of private sector organisations from Zimbabwe, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia.

(b) Cap Business Océan Indien

Cap Business Océan Indien, (formerly, the 'Union des Chambres, de Commerce et d'Industrie de l'océan Indien' was created in 2005 in Madagascar. It brings together Chambers of Commerce and Industry and professional organizations from 6 territories of the Indian Ocean (Comoros, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mayotte, Réunion and Seychelles) with the objective of promoting trade and investment in the region.

The MCCI is a founding member of the regional organization.

i) Restructuring

Cap Business océan Indien was restructured in 2022 to better serve the professional organizations of the Indian Ocean region. An operational team of 8 people is now responsible for accompanying economic operators in understanding the transition issues for a more sustainable development.

ii) Meeting of the Executive Committee

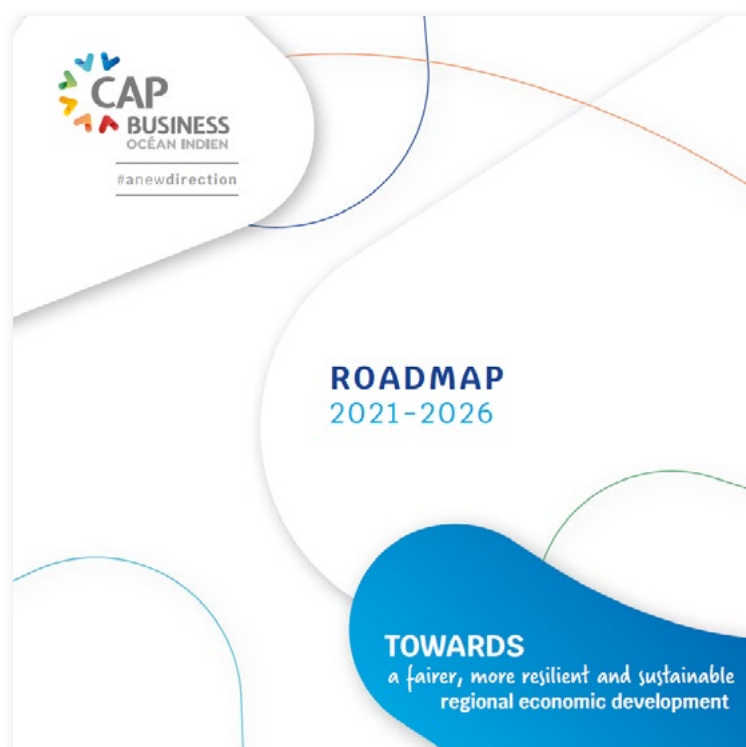
The Executive Committee was held in Mauritius on 14 October 2023:



From left to right : Pierrick Robert (Réunion), B. A. Oussen (Mayotte), N. Angélie (Réunion), G. Hugnin (Mauritius), J. Andriamamonjirison (Madagascar), C. Ahmed (Comoros), N. Jagannath Hardowar (Mauritius), R. Rakotondrasanjy (Madagascar)

iii) Implementation of Road Map 2021-2026

Numerous meetings held with operators in the region have enabled Cap Business océan Indien to draft action plans on the priority sectors of the Roadmap 2021-2026 launched in November 2021. The roadmap is part of the association's strategy to reposition itself and to further consolidate its role and objectives at regional level through capacity building. The priority sectors are: Blue Economy, Maritime Connectivity, Sustainable Tourism, Circular Economy, Low Carbon Strategies.



iv) Action plan

Cap Business océan Indien has launched its action plan early March 2023, following the recommendations made at the 13th Economic Forum of the Indian Ocean Islands organized in October 2022. A series of conferences and webinars will be launched in March 2023 to continue the reflections initiated during the forum.

v) Other activities

With the support of the French Development Agency, Cap Business Océan has developed further tools to be closer to private operators, namely the provision on the website of an economic knowledge base on the region and of the priority sectors of the Roadmap.

The association is also encouraging private sector companies to develop projects linked to sustainable development.

(c) COMESA Business Council



The COMESA Business Council is established by the Treaty of COMESA and mandated to serve as the Consultative Committee of the business community. As a business member organization, it is the recognized regional apex body of the private sector in the COMESA Member States. The MCCI is the national focal point of the CBC.

(i) Strategic Planning 2023-2025

The COMESA Business Council 2023 - 2025 Strategic Planning meeting was held between the 15th and 17th of January 2023. The meeting was attended by outgoing COMESA Secretary General for Programmes Amb. Kipyego Cheluget,

It is expected that the new strategy will unlock opportunities for the business community in the region, giving impetus to increased business linkages between COMESA Member States, and the broader continent, towards increased and sustainable intra-trade.



From left to right : Standing: Mr. Melaku Ezezew CBC Board Director (Ethiopia); Mr. Issa Sekitto, CBC Board Director (Uganda); and Mr. Tinashe Manzungu, Board Director (Zimbabwe)

Seated: Mr Teddy Yagambaram Soobramanien, CBC Chief Executive Officer; Dr. Amany Asfour, CBC immediate Past President; Amb. Kipyego Cheluget, COMESA Assistant General for Programs (Kenya); Mr. Marday Venkatasamy, CBC President (Mauritius); Mr. Mucai Kunjiha, CBC First Vice President (Kenya); and Mr. James Chimwaza, Second Vice-President (Malawi)

(ii) AfCFTA: Training for SMEs

The COMESA Business Council (CBC) in partnership with the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), the International Trade Centre (ITC), and the Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry has set the tone for implementation of one of the five operational instruments of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) through embarking on training of over three hundred (300) export-ready Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Business Support Institutions, on market analysis using the African Trade Observatory in Zambia, Malawi, Ethiopia and Egypt.

This capacity building initiative is supported under the COMESA Regional Enterprise Competitiveness and Access to Markets Programme (RECAMP) funded by 11th European Development Fund.

(iii) Digital Financial Inclusion

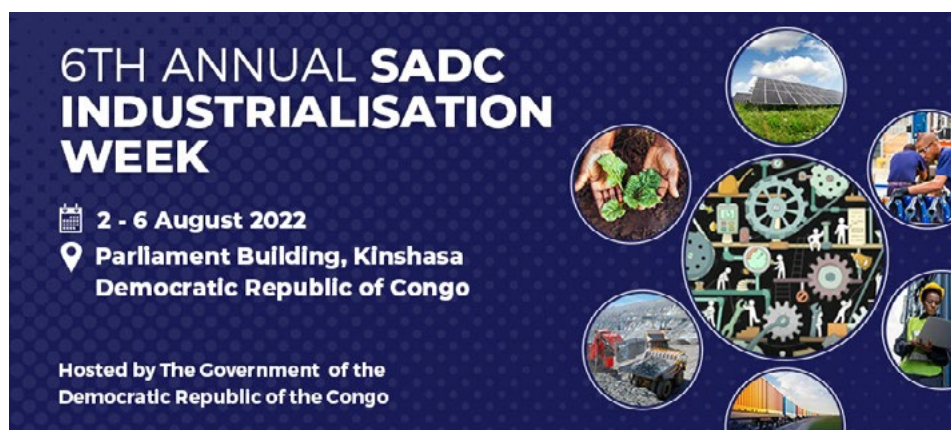
CBC has been carrying out assessments on the status of the regional, and national payment infrastructure in the eight pilot countries (Zambia, Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Egypt, Ethiopia and Mauritius) of the Digital Financial Inclusion (DFI) for MSMEs Program; this exercise will inform the COMESA Retail Payments Platform's overall infrastructure design; technical, functional, legal and regulatory requirements; estimated cost of equipment; and implementation mechanism.

(d) SADC Business Council



The SADC Business Council (SADC BC) is a Regional Apex body of national business associations of the 16 SADC Member States and Regional Business Associations in Southern Africa. It is mandated by the private sector to be the prime partner to the public sector, influencing high-level policymaking related to markets access, industrialisation, value chains development and socio-economic development at a regional, continental, and global level.

(i) SADC Industrialisation Week (SIW) 2022



The 6th SIW was jointly organised by the SADC Business Council and the SADC Secretariat and hosted by the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) in Kinshasa from the 2nd – 6th of August 2022 under the theme “Promoting industrialization through agro-processing, mineral beneficiation, and regional value chains for inclusive and resilient economic growth.”

The SIW is an annual public-private engagement platform aimed at fostering new opportunities for intra-African trade, developing cross-border value chains, and identifying investment opportunities in Southern Africa. The SIW brings together leading private sector experts, regional and global policymakers, Development Finance Institutions, SADC officials, donors, civil society and leading industrialists and captains of industry within SADC and on the continent to identify investment opportunities, industrialisation bottlenecks and jointly recommend solutions. The MCC attended the event.

(ii) SADC-Africa Trade and Investment Marketplace

The SADC Business Council (SADC BC) in partnership with Afreximbank launched the SADC - Africa Trade and Investment Marketplace (SATIM) during the 6th annual SADC Industrialization Week. This initiative aims to promote regional trade, unlock investment opportunities, deepen economic cooperation, and drive sustainable business growth between the SADC region and the rest of Africa.



SATIM will provide the private sector in the SADC region with a platform to foster higher-level engagement in trade and investment-related matters with the rest of Africa.

(iii) SADC Tourism Business Platform



Tourism apex associations from SADC Member States convened at a workshop held on 22-23 November 2022 in Johannesburg, South Africa to launch the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Tourism Business Platform (TBP).

The aim of the platform is to address tourism barriers and advance the sustainable development of the regional tourism industry. The platform will provide the tourism private sector in the SADC region an opportunity to foster a collective and coordinated approach towards tourism development by influencing regional tourism policy direction and increasing regional marketing and investment.

The background features a collage of digital marketing icons including a globe, social network figures, a magnifying glass, a smartphone, and a cursor. These are overlaid on a teal rectangular area on the right side of the page.

Communication and Marketing

Throughout the year, the Communication and Marketing team continued its effort to promote the activities of the MCCI and of its business units. Members of the business community have been constantly updated on the publication and on the events organized by the institution.

The media monitoring services provided continuous feedback on the media coverage of the activities of the MCCI.

An integrated marketing and communication plan is being developed to further cater for the needs of the business community and will be deployed during the course of this year.

Events & Projects

Marketing has been key for the promotion of MCCI and its business units. The department has been actively involved in the coordination and production of marketing and branding materials for the different projects in 2022.

To name a few, the development of the marketing plan for electronic Tax Refund (eTRS), departing Mauritians and eVoucher, continuous on-site visits and canvassing (outreach programme) in shops, craft markets and shopping malls have been the focus. Commercialisation of tax-free shopping website banners is being pursued this year, and an integrated campaign has started in MK flight and at the airport. Other marketing collaterals across the touchpoints will be ready to be deployed in the forthcoming months.

Video Marketing Strategy

Video marketing strategy has been incorporated in the different campaigns. The department has been involved in the production of different videos like TOAM mobile App, TOAM Online platform, eTRS and eVoucher HOW TO steps, to promote the different products across channels.

Your Guide to Digital Tax Free Shopping



- BEFORE/ON ARRIVAL**
 - Download your MCCI Tax Refund mobile App
 - Create your profile and register
 - Fill in your personal details, passport & travel information
 - Generate a QR code
- IN STORE**
 - Shop at MCCI Tax Refund-registered shops
 - Get your QR Code scanned
- UPON DEPARTURE**
 - Get your QR Code scanned at:
 - MRA Customs Counter
 - MCCI Tax Refund Counter
 - Get refunded in cash or on your credit card

Bonus: You can now track all your purchases on the MCCI Tax Refund App

MORE THAN 1,200 STORES ACROSS MAURITIUS

Locate your Tax Refund shops via your App

- EASY
- CONVENIENT
- HASSLE-FREE
- SEAMLESS
- PAPERLESS



SCAN TO DOWNLOAD APP

Google Play | App Store | Microsoft

www.taxfreeshopping.mu | Tax Free Shopping in Mauritius





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Media Strategy – social media

In terms of media strategy, social media platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook and YouTube have been the main channels used with engaging contents and targeted campaigns during the year. The social media accounts generated over 30,000 impressions. These tools remain a key platform for our forthcoming campaigns' effectiveness.

Revamping of MCCI Website



More than 150,000 visitors browsed the MCCI website for the year 2022-2023. The website will be revamped for an enhanced user experience and more interactive contents to better serve the needs of the business community.

The MCCI will pursue its efforts to make known its activities and services.

Some examples of engaging campaigns conducted via social media for different business units:



Facebook page:

more than

22,845 likes
and **3,185** followers

Departing Mauritian campaign
post: over 2,300 people reached



Over **85,000**
Campaign reach
with **20,000** post
engagements
on Facebook

1,000- 3,000
impressions per
campaign post on LinkedIn



• Over

2,500 visitors
visited the FEIOI page linked to
MCCI website

• Over

10,000 people
reach
on social media campaigns





MCCI Business School

2022: The year of 'Recovery'

The easing of sanitary restrictions in 2022 has allowed the MCCI Business School to hold all its classes on-site. The challenges brought by the pandemic have enabled the MCCI Business School to set up a strong technology-enabled strategic framework, in view of transforming the mode of learning.

(i) Enrolment

The MCCI Business School has been able to meet its enrolment target for 2022 by enrolling full-time and 'Alternance' students as well as students from Mayotte as part of a student mobility program. Two new diploma courses in management and communication started in September 2022 in Mayotte. The students will complete their first year in Mayotte and are expected to join the MCCI Business School for their second year as from September 2023.

The MCCI Business School is further consolidating its position in the Mauritian and Indian Ocean tertiary educational landscape as an institution with a "tradition of excellence".

**(ii) Examinations**

The standard end of year examinations, which are organised in close collaboration and supervision of the 'Académie de la Réunion' and the Lycée La Bourdonnais, also resumed in 2022.

The visiting lecturers from our international academic partners travelled to Mauritius in May and June 2022 to assess our BTS students whereas the examinations for Bachelors and Masters were held under the supervision of the respective partner university and the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate.

(iii) Marketing

Traditional student recruitment fairs have also resumed with the improvement of the sanitary situation. The MCCI Business School participated in several education fairs held notably by the "Institut Français de Maurice" and "Le Defimedia". An open day was also held on the premises of the MCCI Business School in July 2022.

Digital marketing campaigns were enhanced to improve the visibility of the MCCI Business School both locally and overseas and the support of local partners has been enlisted to help in students' recruitment in the neighboring countries.

(iv) Success rate in 2022

The MCCI Business School has maintained a high overall pass rate of 94% for the 2022 examination sessions (BTS, Bachelor and Masters).

(v) Graduation ceremony 2022

The annual graduation ceremony, which could not be organised in 2021 due to sanitary restrictions, was held this year on the 8th of December at the Trianon Convention Centre for students having obtained their diplomas in 2021 and 2022. The ceremony was held in the presence of Mrs Marjorie Coste from the 'Académie de la Réunion' as well as Mrs Muriel Piquet-Viaux of the French Embassy.



From left to right : M. Toriden CHELLAPERMAL, CEO , MCCI Business School, Mrs Marjorie COSTE DRAREIC - from the Académie de la Réunion, Mrs Muriel PIQUET-VIAUX, from the French Embassy and Mr Guillaume HUGNIN, Chairperson of the MCCI Business School

(vi) Sanitary protocols

With the easing of sanitary restrictions in 2022 and resumption of on-site classes, the MCCI Business School has encouraged 'in-person' teaching while maintaining an adequate sanitary protocol for students who displayed any sign of flu/COVID-19.

Deep cleaning and disinfection of the premises continue to be carried out on a regular basis.

(vii) Continued investment in digital infrastructure

The MCCI Business School has continuously strived to revisit its approach to teaching and learning to respond to new challenges imposed by the pandemic. A continuing upgrade of the IT infrastructure - investment in videoconferencing systems and a Learning Management System, with the participation of the "Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie", demonstrates its constant commitment to digital innovation to allow for the provision of a high-class teaching and learning environment to both its staff and students, while remaining flexible and responsive. With the easing of sanitary restrictions in 2022 and resumption of on-site classes, the MCCI Business School has encouraged 'in-person' teaching while maintaining an adequate sanitary protocol for students who displayed any sign of flu/COVID-19.

Deep cleaning and disinfection of the premises continue to be carried out on a regular basis.

(viii) International Partnerships



The school has 4 existing MOU's namely with the "Académie de la Réunion", the University of Poitiers, the University of Angers and more recently with the University of Reunion Island, which allows for the following internationally recognized qualifications to be offered to Mauritian as well as foreign students.

The MOU with the University of Poitiers expired in December 2022 and was not renewed. The MCCI Business School has however been able to strike an agreement with the 'IAE (Institut d'Administration des Entreprises) d'Angers'.

The extension of our collaboration with Angers has enabled the MCCI Business School to avoid any disruption in the students' academic pathway with the successful launching in October 2022 of a "Licence Economie-Gestion parcours Management International", in replacement of the Licence de Gestion with Poitiers.

The following courses are currently on offering Undergraduate Programmes

Diplomas:

- BTS Services Informatiques aux Organisations (Software development)
 - BTS Gestion de la PME (Management)
 - BTS Management des Unités Commerciales (Marketing)
 - BTS Assurance (Insurance Studies)
 - BTS Banque (Banking Studies)
 - BTS Communication (Communication)
- (A BTS is equivalent to a Higher National Diploma in the French education system)

Bachelors :

- Licence Economie-Gestion (Management)
- Licence de Tourisme (Tourism)
- Licence des Métiers de la Communication (Communication)

All the training programmes and courses offered by the MCCI Business School, as well as the institution itself, are duly accredited by the Higher Education Commission and the Mauritius Qualifications Authority. The award courses are internationally recognized and benefit from the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), which helps students to move between countries and to have their academic qualifications and study periods abroad recognised.

The MCCI Business School is furthermore pursuing the diversification of its course offerings to propose a wider range of courses to cater for the changing work environment and major technological advances.

The school also received the visit of an "Inspectrice Générale" from Paris mandated by the 'Académie de la Reunion' to review existing partnerships in the Indian Ocean region. Verbal feedback from the 'Académie de la Reunion' appears to be positive. However, the MCCI Business School is still awaiting formal feedback from the 'Académie de la Reunion' and any eventual recommendation.

(ix) Professional training

Following the MOU signed in 2020 with the 'Chambre des Métiers et de l'Artisanat de la Réunion (CMAR)', the 'Certificat Technique des Métiers Installateur en Equipements Electriques (CTM IEE)', a recognized professional upskilling course in electrical installations, was launched with some 15 students in May 2022, in collaboration with the Mechanical and Electrical Engineering Contractors Association (MEECA).

The objective is to provide new opportunities for unemployed youth between the age of 15 - 19 years old with no academic qualifications, as well as upskilling or reskilling of existing workforce.

The MCCI Business School was also approached to offer a short course in the field of soft skills development in the retail sector. This course saw the participation of about 200 employees from a major supermarket chain in Mauritius.

Student life

Building works for the extension of the existing premises started in July 2021 were completed in April 2022. The new facilities offer a proper recreational area and better working environment to the students and personnel of the MCCIBS.



Tribute to Ashraf Joomun, Chief Academic Officer

The Board of Directors of the MCCIBS, the staff of the MCCI and MCCI Business School, students and teachers of the school, paid a heartfelt tribute to Ashraf Joomun, the Chief Academic Officer who passed away in April 2022.

Ashraf had been present since the launching of the school in 1988 and had substantially contributed to its continued success and development.

He was recruited in 1988 by MCCI as a lecturer in computer science. In September of the same year, MCCI launched the BTS courses in Computer Science in collaboration with the French Embassy, thus becoming the first private sector institution outside the French territory to offer courses leading to a French diploma. Ashraf was appointed as the head of the training center which is known today as the MCCI Business School.

Ashraf has been the pillar of the MCCI Business School since its inception and has dedicated much of his time to the development of the school. He has contributed immensely to making MCCIBS a key institution in the Mauritian tertiary landscape.

Prospects

The year 2022 was not without its challenges, including a high level of political instability owing to the Russo-Ukrainian crisis, combined with a resurgence of COVID-19 in China and the ongoing fight against inflation. For 2023, the global outlook remains gloomy, with scope for lower growth – at 2.9% – and higher inflation.

Similarly, on the local front, the Mauritian economy is estimated to grow by 5.0% in 2023 compared to a higher growth of 7.8% in 2022. The business environment remains highly volatile and uncertain as a result of culminating pressures from high inflation, weakening global growth and high input costs.

In anticipation of these challenging times, the attention of the Chamber remains focused on supporting the business community, through its network to work and create workable solutions for the industry, associated stakeholders and its members. The MCCI continues to proactively engage with government and related stakeholders to ensure that its members are kept abreast and prepared for any government or policy changes/regulations. Effective public-private dialogue remains an integral part of the Chamber's commitment in addressing business constraints. Working with the relevant policy makers in order to find solutions with long-term and sustainable impact so as to contribute to economic growth and facilitate trade and business activities remains a top priority.

Ensuring business continuity rests high on the agenda of the MCCI, especially during challenging times when business resilience and confidence remain uncertain. Effective and successful policy decision-making lies within the successful implementation of a mandatory Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) legislation – which remain a concern for the Chamber following a number of recently introduced regulations / measures which did not go through appropriate RIA procedures, some of which are likely to have adverse impact on supply chains, production as well as service delivery.

As the key driver for business, the MCCI seeks to improve the competitiveness and deepen the participation of the private sector in business and trade matters through advocacy, business facilitation and enterprise development. That includes setting priorities and implementing specific advocacy strategies to address key trade barriers and business impediments which have a direct bearing on the participation of the business community.

At a time when the global economy is fraught with the issues of global energy and food crises, amidst geopolitical risks and climatic crises, the MCCI, through concerted consultations within its different Commissions, leaves no stone unturned to help and assist its members and the business community address different industrial, business and trade issues. Key on the agenda is the need for a strategic approach towards economic sustainability while addressing issues related to employment, skills gap, and labour shortages. The need for a national human capital strategy is of critical importance.

Addressing this issue of natural resource management especially in the context of the climate change and its repercussions on the economy remain a key concern for the MCCI. Curtailing inflation and the cost-of-living crisis remain a major objective for the MCCI.

Stakeholder engagement and advocacy have been high on the agenda in 2022 and remain prominent in this year as well. Wide consultations have been conducted in different areas such as circular economy, food regulations, plastic issues, supply chain issues, price regulations, rise in electricity tariffs, renewable energy, and trade issues. Consultations remain on-going.

With the enforcement of recently signed free trade agreements with China, India, and the African region, MCCI's international agenda remains busy with renewed efforts to leveraging on these FTAs to further encourage export and expand the country's export capacity – both in terms of goods and services. The desire to position Mauritius as a strategic and competitive trading partner on both the regional and international front require collaborative efforts. This will call for enhanced focus on the need for embracing new technologies, strengthening cooperation in areas such as innovation, research and development, services, and attracting investment.

The Chamber will consolidate and leverage on its acquis to further promote trade in goods and services, as well as attract investment while strengthening its existing regional and international cooperation for mutual benefits.

The MCCI is entirely focused on its role and responsibility in such unpredictable times. Many initiatives have been undertaken over the past year and continued efforts to assist the business community remain crucial while working hand-in-hand with the public authorities and relevant stakeholders.

On this note, I wish to thank the Vice-President Charles Harel and Council Members for their valuable contribution and their active support during my term of office.

Many thanks also to the Chairpersons and Members of the Sub-Committees for their advice and support. I would like to thank Marday Venkatasamy, GOSK, for his commitment as Chairperson of the COMESA Business Council and as Vice-Chair of the Africa Business Council. Thank you also to Guillaume Hugnin for his dedication as a Board Member to the Cap Business océan Indien.

I would also like to place on record the support I received during my term of office from the former Secretary-General, Dr Yousouf Ismaël, from the Officer in Charge, Ms Sarada Moothoosamy and from the dedicated team at the MCCI.

Mrs. Namita Jagarnath Hardowar
President

List of Abbreviations

AfCFTA

African Continental Free Trade Area/Agreement

ATMC

Association of Trust and Management Companies

CBC

COMESA Business Council

CCIFM

Chambre de Commerce et d'Industrie France-Maurice

CECPA

Comprehensive Economic Cooperation and Partnership Agreement

COMESA

Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa

EAIAC

East Africa International Arbitration Conference

EDB

Economic Development Board

ESA countries

Eastern and Southern African Countries

FTA

Free Trade Area/Agreement

GDP

Gross Domestic Product

GFM

Global Finance Mauritius

GII

Global Innovation Index

ICC

International Chamber of Commerce

IORA

Indian Ocean Rim Association

IORBF

Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum

MARENA

Mauritius Renewable Energy Agency

MEMA

Middle East and Mediterranean Africa

NAPRO

National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office

NESC

National Economic and Social Council

OECD

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SADC

Southern African Development Community

SADC BC

SADC Business Council

SPS measures

Sanitary and phyto-sanitary measures

TOAM

Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism

TFS

Tax Free Shopping

TTR

Tourist Tax Refund

UCCIOI

Union des Chambres de Commerce et d'Industrie de l'océan Indien

WCF

World Chambers Federation

