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# Forging One People, One Nation

His Excellency Mr Dharambeer Gokhool, G.C.S.K., President of the Republic of Mauritius, on inclusive leadership, the transformative power of education, and Mauritius' enduring promise to the world.

**"Investment in education is the most strategic and far-reaching investment any country can make."**

**H.E. Dharambeer Gokhool, G.C.S.K.,** President of the Republic of Mauritius

**Your journey, from a modest childhood to academic, minister, and now Head of State, has been remarkable. How has it shaped your view of leadership?**

My journey has been unconventional. I come from a modest family of nine children, and a single formative moment set me on the path towards education. At the end of my primary schooling, when most children of my generation were expected to learn a trade or support their families, my head teacher, Mr Abdool Raman Kasenally, asked to meet my mother. He told her, "I believe your son has potential. Please consider continuing his education." That intervention proved decisive. My family chose to invest in my education. I pursued my studies in Mauritius and subsequently in India before returning home to join the University of Mauritius as an academic. During the post-independence period, observing the aspirations of our people, I was gradually drawn into public life. In 1982, I was first elected to the National Assembly. At the time, academics could take leave from the university to serve in Parliament, provided they forwent their salary during that period. I accepted this without hesitation, as I felt a strong duty to serve the country. That dual experience in academia and politics profoundly shaped my understanding of leadership. It reinforced my conviction that politics and leadership are not about self-interest or personal advancement, but about service to society, the community, and the country. Over the years, this conviction has deepened. Leadership, in my view, is about responsibility, integrity, and the willingness to place the public good above personal considerations. My journey has taught me that institutions matter, but that compassion, humility, and a sense of purpose matter equally in public life.

**How do you interpret your constitutional role in promoting unity, democratic values, and national identity?**

As President of the Republic, my constitutional responsibility is to uphold the Constitution: ensuring our democratic institutions function effectively, the rule of law is respected, and every citizen's fundamental rights and freedoms are protected. Equally central to this role is the duty to preserve unity within our diverse society. Mauritius is a country shaped by a rich and complex history, marked by successive waves of colonial rule under France and Britain and by the lived legacy of slavery and indentured labor. From this layered past, we have succeeded in building a nation that is broadly harmonious and cohesive. Safeguarding that achievement is at the heart of my constitutional mandate. In fulfilling this role, I have sought to ensure that the Presidency remains close to the people. The State House is not a distant institution; it welcomes students, NGOs working in fields such as the environment, youth empowerment, and social inclusion, and citizens from all walks of life. I also maintain regular institutional engagement, including weekly meetings with the Prime Minister every Thursday, which form part of the dialogue necessary for good governance. Beyond the State House, I participate in the country's diverse cultural, religious, and social celebrations. These interactions allow me to hear our people's aspirations, observe our society's evolution, and remain conscious that diversity is one of our greatest strengths. Promoting unity in a plural society such as Mauritius requires continual attention and engagement. National identity cannot be sustained by constitutional provisions alone; it must be nurtured through dialogue, mutual respect, and a shared sense of belonging. I see the Presidency not merely as a constitutional office, but also as a moral institution that can help reinforce social cohesion, democratic culture, and confidence in our common future.

**Your background in education is well known. How do you see education as a strategic lever for Mauritius' future prosperity and social mobility?**

My own life illustrates the transformative power of education. It opened doors that allowed me to move from a modest background into spaces of learning, service, and national responsibility. This experience shaped my conviction that education is not only a personal asset but a powerful instrument of national transformation. Since independence, Mauritius has consistently placed education at the center of its development model. We introduced free primary education in 1976, followed by free secondary and tertiary education in 1977, and later extended support through measures such as free school transport in 2005. Each step was guided by a simple but profound principle: no child should be denied opportunity because of economic circumstances. The introduction of free school transport emerged from a human experience. During a visit to a remote village,

## "Leadership is about responsibility, integrity, and the willingness to place the public good above personal considerations."

a family shared that one of their two children had been kept at home because they could not afford the bus fare for both children to attend school. That moment underscored a powerful truth: access to education must not only exist in principle, but also in reality. As Minister of Education, I placed strong emphasis on curriculum reform, teacher training, infrastructure development, and continuous improvement in learning outcomes. We also made an important distinction between equality and equity. Equality ensures the same provision for all; equity recognizes that some learners require additional support to reach the same starting point. Today, Mauritius has a highly educated, multilingual population, with a diaspora contributing worldwide in diverse professional fields. This represents a national asset of immense value. Investment in education is the most strategic and far-reaching investment any country can make because it shapes not only individual futures, but also the trajectory of the nation itself. Looking ahead, Mauritius must ensure that our education system remains agile, inclusive, and aligned with the demands of a rapidly changing world. The future economy will increasingly reward adaptability, creativity, digital competence, and lifelong learning. Education must equip young people not only for employment, but also for active citizenship, ethical leadership, and meaningful participation in society.

**Youth expectations are evolving rapidly, and technology is everywhere. How are you preparing the next generation?**

We are living through a profound technological transformation, and our education system must evolve to prepare young people for the world they are entering. Artificial intelligence and digital literacy are being progressively mainstreamed, with AI integrated into university programs and information technology embedded within primary and secondary curricula. At the same time, our approach to education remains holistic. Education cannot be limited to certificates and diplomas. Our objective is to develop well-rounded individuals who are curious, creative, critical thinkers, and grounded in civic responsibility. From the Presidency, in collaboration with the Ministries of Education, ICT, and Tertiary Education, Science and Research, we have launched initiatives such as the National Essay Competition, which strengthens literacy and awareness of national history, and the National Learn AI School Innovation Challenge, which allows students to apply artificial intelligence to real-world challenges. We are also expanding the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award – Mauritius Scheme, promoting leadership, community engagement, and entrepreneurial spirit. Alongside technology, we continue to value reading, analytical thinking, and intellectual curiosity, fundamentally human skills that cannot be replaced by machines. We are equally attentive to preserving our linguistic and cultural heritage in a society where English, French, Creole, and many ancestral languages coexist. For us, heritage and innovation are deeply complementary. Preparing the next generation is not only a technological challenge; it is also a human and ethical one. Young people must learn to navigate complexity, misinformation, rapid change, and increasing global interdependence. They must not merely use technology, but shape it responsibly and critically while remaining anchored in citizenship, empathy, and democratic responsibility.

**Mauritius balances dynamic growth with a treasured environment. How should the country lead on sustainability and climate resilience?**

We are conscious that we are a small island developing state. Although Mauritius' own carbon footprint is minimal, our exposure to climate change is real, and we are acting on multiple fronts. We are investing in renewable energy, particularly solar, to diversify our energy mix and reduce dependence on fossil fuels. We are strengthening food security through technology-driven agro-industry, protecting coastal zones from erosion, and modernizing waste management. Resilience is not only about defending what we have. It is about positioning Mauritius as a solution provider in the blue economy, agro-tech, and clean energy. We have the natural assets, educated workforce, and political will to play that role. We also want young Mauritians to help lead this transition, which represents new careers, industries, and a renewed sense of stewardship for the island they will inherit.

**Looking ahead, what legacy do you hope to leave, and what is your message to international readers, investors, and partners?**

When I was sworn in, I told myself: I am here for the people and for the Republic. Coming from a modest background, I remain sensitive to inclusion and opportunity. My ambition is to help strengthen our democracy, advance social inclusion and justice, and reinforce a people-centric model of development. Strong institutions make strong democracies, and unity, peace, and harmony are values that must be renewed in every generation. As our national anthem reminds us, I want Mauritians to feel that during my presidency, I contributed to forging one people and one nation. To international readers, investors, and partners, my message is simple. Mauritius is a strong democracy that respects the rule of law, with business-friendly institutions and a robust public-private partnership. Geographically, we are a platform and stepping stone to Africa, supported by strong international relationships. Our greatest competitive advantage is our people: educated, multilingual, adaptable, and hospitable. That is the fruit of decades of investment in human capital and our history, a society that has lived peacefully with diversity for centuries. Whether you come to live, invest, study, or visit, Mauritius offers a rare combination: a stable democracy, an open economy, a skilled workforce, a beautiful environment, and a culture built on unity in diversity. We have built the conditions for partnership and are ready to welcome those who want to build the future with us.

# Mauritius and the New Geography of Global Trade

As global trade patterns shift and Africa's economic integration accelerates, Dhananjay Ramful outlines Mauritius' ambition to position itself as a bridge between Africa, Asia, Europe, and the US through diplomacy and cooperation.

**Hon. Dhananjay Ramful**
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade

**Honourable Minister, how has your professional journey prepared you for this role?**
My background is primarily in law. I completed my tertiary education in London before returning to Mauritius to begin my career in private practice. Later, I joined the anti-corruption agency as Senior Legal Advisor before opening my own legal chambers. The head of my chambers was himself a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and my father-in-law also served as Minister of Foreign Affairs and President of the Republic. Studying law exposed me to subjects such as international trade, commerce, and European law, which now help me better understand the work of this ministry. Ultimately, the opportunity to serve in this role came through the confidence placed in me by the Prime Minister. It is a broad ministry with significant responsibilities, but also one that is central to Mauritius' future.

**How would you define the ministry's core mandate today?**
Mauritius faces unique vulnerabilities and challenges as a small island developing state, and the role of the ministry is to help transform those challenges into opportunities. Diplomatically, we assess global developments, advise the government on foreign policy, and maintain international relationships through our embassies and high commissions. Regional integration is equally important. Mauritius is a member of organizations including the Indian Ocean Commission, SADC, COMESA, and the African Continental Free Trade Area. Through these platforms, we work on priorities linked to climate change, maritime security, sustainable development, and economic integration. Trade is another major pillar. International trade is now inseparable from diplomacy and regional cooperation, and we have dedicated teams advising the government on trade policy in an evolving geopolitical environment.

**How does Mauritius balance commercial interests with diplomatic priorities?**
For Mauritius, balance is essential. Africa, Asia, Europe, the United States, and the Middle East are all important partners, and as a small country, we must maintain strong and constructive relationships with each of them. Our trade agreements are designed not only to support economic growth, but also to create long-term strategic partnerships. We have a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement with India covering preferential access for more than 615 Mauritian products. We also have agreements with the UAE and China, including ongoing discussions around "FTA 2.0" with China aimed at expanding tariff-free trade even further. With the United States, Mauritius benefits from the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), which allows duty-free exports for a range of products. Mauritius has also developed a mature and well-regulated financial services sector that supports international investment flows and has become an important pillar of the economy.

> **"The African Continental Free Trade Area represents one of the greatest opportunities of our time, and Mauritius is positioning itself as a stable gateway for global investment into Africa."**

**Why is Africa becoming increasingly important for Mauritius?**
Africa represents one of the greatest economic opportunities of the future. The African Continental Free Trade Area is particularly transformative because it creates a market of more than 1.8 billion people across 54 countries. Africa has natural resources, a young labor force, and enormous market potential. Many countries still require greater levels of investment, technology, and expertise, creating opportunities for partnerships with investors from Asia, Europe, and the United States. Mauritius is positioning itself as a stable and reliable platform for investment into Africa. Investors are looking for transparency, regulatory certainty, strong institutions, and ease of doing business, and these are areas where Mauritius has built a strong reputation internationally. This is also why we are strengthening relationships with organizations such as the Corporate Council on Africa and hosting international summits that bring together governments, investors, and businesses from across continents.

**How is the government engaging with Mauritians overseas?**
Mauritians abroad remain strongly connected to the country, whether they are based in Europe, Australia, Canada, or the United States. A few years ago, Mauritius introduced a diaspora scheme designed to encourage Mauritians to return and invest back home. The scheme includes incentives such as an eight-year tax holiday for returning Mauritians who establish businesses locally, as well as exemptions on duties for assets they bring back to the country. These measures have already helped attract skilled professionals back to Mauritius. We are currently working with the International Organization for Migration to review and modernize the scheme further so that it becomes even more attractive and encourages greater engagement from the diaspora.

**What is your broader vision for Mauritius globally?**
Mauritius is uniquely positioned between Africa and Asia. Our vision is to strengthen the country's role as a trusted gateway connecting global capital, trade, and investment opportunities with the African continent. The coming years are particularly important for Mauritius on the diplomatic front. We will host major international gatherings, including the Corporate Council on Africa summit and the Indian Ocean Conference, bringing together investors and policymakers from around the world. These events are opportunities to showcase Mauritius not only as a tourism destination, but also as a stable, modern, and globally connected economy capable of facilitating international cooperation and investment across the Africa-Asia corridor.

# Stability, Subsidies, and a Hub Between Asia and Africa

Mauritius combines political and economic stability with active consumer protection and a long-term ambition to position itself as a trade gateway between Asia and Africa.

**Hon. Michaël Yeung Sik Yuen**
Minister of Commerce and Consumer Protection

**Can you tell us about your background and the journey that brought you to the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection?**
I studied commerce in Canada before returning to Mauritius to join my family's retail and supermarket business. I entered politics in 2005 as a councillor for Curepipe and later became mayor. In 2010, I was first appointed Minister of Business, Enterprise, Commerce and Consumer Protection before moving to the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure in 2011. I returned to the government in November 2024 when the Prime Minister appointed me once again to lead the Commerce and Consumer Protection portfolio.

**What did you find when you returned to the ministry in November 2024, and what has changed since?**
We inherited major financial deficits, particularly at the State Trading Corporation, which manages the pricing mechanism for petrol and diesel. That account alone carried a deficit of approximately MUR 2.4 billion (about US$74 million). Today, it has been reduced to around MUR 1.6 billion (about US$35 million), while we have also lowered the price of mogas twice and diesel once. The turnaround has been significant. The State Trading Corporation recorded losses of MUR 3.7 billion (about US$80.5 million) in 2021–2022, but this year it posted a profit of MUR 3.5 billion (about US$76.2 million). That demonstrates what disciplined management and clear priorities can achieve.

**Cost of living is a global concern. How is Mauritius keeping essential goods affordable for its people?**
Before the election, we committed to a price stabilization fund of MUR 10 billion (about US$218 million), and implementation has already begun at around MUR 2 billion (about US$43.5 million) per year. Working with the Chamber of Commerce and consumer associations, we identified a basket of essential products including milk, cheese, edible oil, diapers, canned goods, and selected pharmaceutical products. Milk powder is subsidized by MUR 50 (about US$1.10), edible oil by MUR 10 to MUR 15 (about US$0.22 to US$0.33), and medicines for hypertension, diabetes, and cardiac conditions priced above MUR 100 (about US$2.18) receive a MUR 50 discount. Medicines below that threshold are provided free of charge.

**Do these subsidies apply only to Mauritians, or to everyone?**
They apply to everyone, including tourists. The same principle applies to LPG gas and flour, which remain heavily subsidized. A 12kg LPG bottle costs the government close to MUR 600 (about US$13) and is sold at MUR 190 (about US$4.10). These measures help maintain affordability while supporting Mauritius' attractiveness as a place to live and do business.

> **"Mauritius is a place where you have political stability. We respect the decision of the population."**

**How is this level of consumer support financed without creating new deficits?**
The food basket is financed through the price stabilization fund, while LPG gas, flour, and rice subsidies are supported through a dedicated levy of MUR 7.20 (about US$0.16) per litre collected on mogas and gas oil. It is a transparent mechanism that allows us to maintain predictable pricing for essential goods without destabilizing the broader economy.

**Beyond consumer protection, how does Mauritius position itself as a commercial gateway between Asia and Africa?**
Mauritius has long understood that its competitive advantage lies in being a predictable and transparent bridge between markets. Several ministries and institutions work together on this strategy, including Financial Services, Industry, SMEs, and the Economic Development Board. One of my ambitions is to develop a large-scale trade fair modeled on the Canton Fair, where Indian and Chinese exporters can showcase opportunities for African markets while African entrepreneurs identify investment and trade partnerships. Mauritius offers investors clarity, stability, and ease of doing business, which are critical advantages for a regional hub.

**E-commerce is reshaping retail worldwide. How is Mauritius approaching this sector?**
E-commerce is growing rapidly, but it also requires regulation. We are finalizing a framework designed to strengthen transparency and consumer trust. Businesses operating online will need to register under their legal business name, hold valid licences, and comply with clear standards. Innovation is important, but it must operate within a credible regulatory framework that protects consumers.

**Where do you see the commerce sector of Mauritius heading over the next five to ten years?**
The sector will become more competitive, more digital, and more consumer-driven. We are encouraging greater competition by expanding the range of imported products through the State Trading Corporation while supporting innovation in retail and marketing. The objective is to create a more dynamic marketplace where consumers benefit from wider choice, stronger competition, and fair pricing.

**Finally, what message would you like to share with TIME Africa readers on why now is the right moment to invest in Mauritius?**
Mauritius offers political stability, institutional transparency, a stable currency, and a business-friendly environment. Investors value predictability, and Mauritius has built credibility through governance, consistency, and openness. Beyond that, Mauritius is positioning itself strategically between Asia and Africa as a trade, investment, and services hub. The long-term ambition is to strengthen the country's role within the Asia–Africa corridor while continuing to attract investors, entrepreneurs, and international businesses looking for a stable and globally connected platform.

# Feeding the Future

Mauritius is reshaping agriculture, food security, and the blue economy to strengthen regional trade, maritime connectivity, climate resilience, and sustainable growth while positioning itself as an increasingly strategic gateway between Africa, Asia, and the wider Indian Ocean region.

**Hon. Arvin Boolell**
Minister of Agro-Industry, Food Security, Blue Economy and Fisheries

**How is Mauritius strengthening long-term food security while reducing dependence on imports?**
Food security has become one of the defining priorities of Mauritius' economic strategy. According to Arvin Boolell, the country is pursuing a long-term vision built around resilience, innovation and greater local production. "Our policy is to produce what we eat and eat what we produce," Boolell says. Mauritius currently produces around 25% of its food requirements, with the remainder imported, and the government is focusing on strategic commodities, smarter agricultural systems and stronger regional partnerships rather than unrealistic self-sufficiency targets. "We are re-engineering our agricultural sector," the minister explains. "Putting emphasis on precision agriculture and giving more accompanying measures to those who are in traditional agriculture." Technology is becoming increasingly central to that transformation, with the ministry promoting hydroponics, vertical farming, drip irrigation, shade-house cultivation and drone-assisted precision spraying, while also investing in research, development and innovation. Mauritius is simultaneously encouraging economies of scale through land clustering and closer collaboration between farmers, research institutions and the private sector. The government is also working with regional partners including Madagascar and Réunion to strengthen food supply chains and agricultural cooperation. "Much is happening, much needs to be done," Boolell says. "Agriculture is constantly changing and constantly on the move, and people have to adapt to those changes."

**Why is the blue economy becoming such an important pillar of Mauritius' development strategy?**
For Mauritius, the ocean is increasingly viewed as both an economic engine and a strategic national asset. With an Exclusive Economic Zone spanning approximately 2.2 million square kilometers, the country is positioning itself to expand fisheries, logistics, renewable energy and marine research. "The ocean economy is very important," says Boolell. "Together with the fisheries sector, it may represent almost 11% of our GDP." Mauritius has already established itself as a major player in global tuna processing and exports and is currently the third-largest exporter of tuna to Europe and the UK, supported by an advanced value-addition industry. "We are a net exporter of tuna," Boolell says. "We are the third biggest exporter of tuna to Europe, to the UK." The government is now looking beyond traditional fisheries towards aquaculture, seaweed cultivation, marine conservation and renewable ocean-based industries, while also strengthening efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing across the region. Boolell believes Mauritius' geographic position offers a major strategic advantage as trade flows evolve across the Indian Ocean. "Mauritius will be the star and key of the Indian Ocean," he says. "The potential for port development is massive." The country is therefore investing in port infrastructure, cargo handling and maritime logistics to position itself as a regional gateway connecting Africa, Asia and international shipping routes.

> **"Mauritius will be the star and key of the Indian Ocean."**

**How is Mauritius adapting its agricultural and environmental policies to climate change?**
As a small island developing state, Mauritius remains highly exposed to climate-related risks, including rising temperatures, erratic rainfall and ecosystem degradation. In response, the government is integrating climate resilience directly into agricultural and environmental policy. "We need to revisit policies and develop resilient strategies to protect farmers and to boost food supply," Boolell says. The ministry is prioritizing climate-smart agriculture, sustainable water management, compost production, organic farming and ecosystem restoration, while coral rehabilitation, mangrove propagation and marine protected areas are also forming part of the country's long-term environmental strategy. "We are putting emphasis now on what we call climate-smart agriculture," he explains. "It has to be a pillar of long-term development." Mauritius is also investing in technologies designed to improve productivity while reducing environmental impact, including precision irrigation systems and modern farming techniques adapted to changing climatic conditions. The government is simultaneously working to attract younger generations into agriculture through technology-led production models and innovation-driven farming systems. "Many youngsters are becoming more responsive to organic agriculture and precision agriculture," Boolell says. "But whatever you do needs to have commercial value."

**What is your long-term vision for Mauritius over the next decade?**
Boolell believes Mauritius is entering a new phase of development in which agriculture, logistics, financial services and the blue economy become increasingly interconnected. The country is investing heavily in port infrastructure, cargo handling and ocean-related industries as it positions itself as a gateway between Africa and Asia. At the same time, Mauritius aims to strengthen its reputation as a stable, well-regulated and innovation-driven economy capable of attracting international investment. "Africa is the next frontier of development," Boolell says. "Mauritius has to be showcased as a role model of democracy, peaceful coexistence and sustainable development." The minister believes the country's future competitiveness will depend on its ability to adapt continuously to changing global conditions while remaining focused on sustainability and long-term economic resilience. "We have to stay ahead of the curve," he says, "because the only factor that remains constant in life is change, and you have to change for the better."

# Beyond the Coastline

As Mauritius looks beyond its world-famous beaches, Minister of Tourism Richard Duval outlines a vision for a more sustainable, experience-driven, and globally competitive tourism industry built on culture, authenticity, connectivity, and balanced economic growth.

**Hon. Richard Duval**
Minister of Tourism

**Honourable Minister, your professional journey has been quite unique. How have your experiences shaped your approach to leading Mauritius' tourism sector today?**
I did not initially plan to enter politics. I actually tried to stay away from it when I was younger, although growing up as the son of Sir Gaëtan Duval, who played such a major role in developing tourism in Mauritius, it was always part of my environment. My first career was in horse training, which taught me discipline, patience, and the importance of adapting quickly to changing situations. Later, when I entered politics and was elected in 2005, I gained valuable experience understanding how government works and how policies affect people directly. Spending five years in opposition after 2019 was also an important period for me. It gave me time to reflect and better understand the country's challenges. Those experiences shaped the way I work today: staying practical, grounded, and focused on long-term progress. Tourism itself requires that mindset. Visitor expectations evolve constantly, and destinations must continuously adapt. For Mauritius to remain competitive, we must evolve while preserving what makes the island unique.

**Tourism plays a major role in Mauritius. How do you define its strategic importance for the country's long-term development?**
Tourism is far more than an economic activity for Mauritius. It is one of the pillars of the national economy and supports many sectors simultaneously. Of course, tourism generates foreign exchange and contributes significantly to national revenue, but its wider impact is equally important. It supports employment not only in hotels and resorts, but also across transport, agriculture, fisheries, creative industries, and SMEs. When tourism performs well, the benefits spread throughout the economy. The sector has also helped shape national infrastructure over the years. Airports, roads, and public facilities developed partly through tourism growth are assets that benefit Mauritians every day. Beyond economics, tourism strengthens Mauritius' international visibility and reinforces the country's reputation as a stable, safe, and attractive destination for investment and business. In the long term, tourism can continue driving growth while promoting culture, environmental protection, and more inclusive development across the island.

> **"Tourism must continue to grow, but in a way that respects the limits of the island. If we protect our natural assets today, we protect the future of the sector as well."**

**Mauritius is already globally recognized as a luxury beach destination. How are you repositioning the country to remain competitive in today's tourism market?**
The global tourism market has changed significantly, and travellers today are looking for more meaningful and authentic experiences. That is why Mauritius is moving beyond the traditional "sun, sea, and sand" model toward a more diversified tourism offer. We want visitors to discover that Mauritius is much more than beaches. The island has a rich culture, strong heritage, beautiful natural landscapes, and authentic communities. This creates opportunities to develop inland tourism, eco-tourism, cultural experiences, wellness tourism, and nature-based activities. Sustainability is also central to this repositioning, particularly in reducing pressure on sensitive coastal areas and protecting the environment in the context of climate change. Another important strength for Mauritius is safety and stability. In an increasingly uncertain global environment, travellers value destinations that are secure and reliable. The objective is to build on what makes Mauritius distinctive while expanding the range of experiences available to visitors.

**Sustainability has become a major global concern in tourism. How do you ensure tourism growth remains balanced and environmentally responsible?**
The key challenge is achieving balance. We want tourism growth, but not at the expense of the natural assets that make Mauritius attractive in the first place. To support this, there is a stronger regulatory framework encouraging operators to adopt more responsible practices. Sustainability is no longer optional; it is becoming part of the structure of the industry itself. A major priority is reducing pressure on coastal regions by encouraging tourism development inland and in less fragile areas. Diversifying the tourism experience helps spread economic benefits while also protecting sensitive ecosystems. We are also working closely with operators to improve awareness, training, and best practices around waste management, environmental protection, and resource efficiency. Ultimately, the future success of the sector depends on preserving the island's natural beauty and ecological balance.

**Looking ahead, what would you like Mauritius' tourism sector to represent globally over the next decade?**
I would like Mauritius to be recognized not only as a beautiful island destination, but as one that is authentic, sustainable, and active throughout the year. The vision is to position Mauritius as a true 365-day destination where visitors experience more than the coastline. We want them to discover our culture, heritage, communities, and natural environment in a deeper and more meaningful way. At the same time, tourism must continue contributing to the wider economy and creating opportunities across the country. Success should not only be measured by arrival numbers, but also by the quality of growth and the benefits delivered to local communities. In the end, the goal is to reinforce Mauritius as a premium, responsible, and globally competitive destination with sustainable long-term growth.

# Mauritius Shaping the Future of Investment, Trade, and Innovation

From finance to logistics, Mauritius is strengthening its position as a connected hub driving innovation, investment, and opportunity across Africa and beyond.

**Guillaume Adam**
General Manager, MFD Logistics, part of Mauritius Freeport Development Co. Ltd.

"Mauritius is much more than a tourism destination. It is a strategic gateway between Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Europe, offering political stability, strong infrastructure, reliable internet and electricity, and a multilingual workforce that understands international business. For investors, it is a place where companies can operate efficiently while benefiting from an exceptional quality of life. The Freeport model gives businesses the ability to import, store, transform, and re-export goods in a highly competitive environment, while the country's geographic position makes it a natural logistics corridor for East Africa and the Indian Ocean region. At MFD Logistics, we are investing heavily in digitalization, smarter cargo tracking, warehouse management systems, and sustainable logistics solutions because we believe Mauritius has the potential to become one of the region's leading hubs for trade, logistics, finance, and innovation."

**André Viljoen**
Chief Executive Officer, Air Mauritius

"Air Mauritius has a unique role because we are more than an airline. We are a national brand ambassador for the country. Every ticket sold on Air Mauritius brings foreign currency into Mauritius, and every flight we operate helps promote the destination internationally. Our strength is direct connectivity. While many airlines rely on large transit hubs, Air Mauritius connects travelers directly to the island, which remains a major advantage for both tourism and business travel. The future of the airline is about growth because growth is the best way to remain competitive in a rapidly evolving aviation industry. We are undertaking a full network review to identify new destinations and long-term opportunities over the next five to ten years. Mauritius has enormous potential as a global destination, and Air Mauritius will continue supporting that ambition through stronger connectivity, expanded reach, and strategic growth."

**Dinesh Burrenchobay**
Chairman, Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority

"Mauritius will always remain a premium destination, but the way the country presents itself to the world must continue evolving. Today's travelers are looking for experiences, wellness, nature, culture, family travel, and meaningful connections with destinations. Mauritius has much more to offer than beach and sun alone, and the country needs to tell that story more effectively internationally. The opportunity is not simply to increase visitor numbers, but to create tourism that has a positive impact on local communities and the environment. Mauritius has the people, the hospitality, the infrastructure, and the diversity of experiences to remain highly competitive while building a more sustainable and experience-driven tourism model for the future."

**Faraz Rojid**
Chief Executive Officer, Mauritius Finance

"Investors are becoming far more selective about where they place their capital, and Mauritius continues to stand out because it offers something many markets struggle to provide consistently: stability, clarity and confidence. Over the years, the country has built strong expertise in cross-border investment, funds and private wealth, which has positioned Mauritius as an important link between Africa, Asia and the Middle East. We are also seeing growing interest in fintech and digital financial services, particularly as African economies become more connected. Mauritius already has many of the right foundations in place, from political stability to a predictable regulatory environment, and that gives investors reassurance when looking at long-term opportunities. What makes the country attractive is not only the business framework, but also its ability to adapt and evolve with changing global investment trends."

**Ravin Dajee**
Managing Director, Absa Bank Mauritius

"Mauritius has developed into much more than a tourism destination. Today, it is a well-connected financial and business hub that gives investors a practical and efficient way to access opportunities across Africa. From infrastructure and trade to renewable energy and private investment, we continue to see strong interest from businesses using Mauritius as a base for regional growth. The country benefits from political stability, strong institutions, and a banking sector that understands international business. At the same time, there is a real focus on innovation and digital transformation, which is becoming increasingly important for investors and companies operating across multiple markets. Mauritius also offers a quality of life that helps attract both businesses and global talent, and that combination continues to strengthen its position as a gateway into Africa."

### Marcelo Aleman
Chief Executive Officer, Emtel

"Digital transformation is reshaping economies everywhere, and Mauritius is well-positioned to benefit from that evolution. The country combines strong infrastructure, international connectivity, and an agile business environment that allows innovation to move quickly. Across emerging markets, mobile technology and digital services have transformed how people access financial services, communicate, and participate in the economy, and Mauritius continues advancing in that direction. The future will depend on continued investment in digital infrastructure, smarter networks, and technologies that improve both business competitiveness and everyday life. Mauritius also has the advantage of being able to test and scale solutions within a dynamic market while remaining connected to Africa and international markets. For technology companies and investors, that creates significant opportunities around digital services, connectivity, fintech, and innovation-driven growth."

### Rom Atapattu
Founder/Chief Executive Officer, Patronus Wealth Group

"In today's financial environment, investors are increasingly looking for stability, credibility, and international connectivity, and Mauritius offers all three. The country has positioned itself as a trusted bridge between Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and global capital markets, supported by strong governance standards and a respected regulatory framework. Investors and global families want reassurance that their assets are protected, their information is secure, and that they are operating from a jurisdiction that combines efficiency with long-term reliability. Mauritius also offers the flexibility and openness needed for international business to operate effectively across borders. The opportunity now is for Mauritius to continue building on that trust while embracing innovation, technology, and modern financial infrastructure for the future."

### Veemal Gungadin
Chief Executive Officer, Mauritius Telecom

"Technology is becoming one of the foundations of Mauritius' next phase of growth. The country has already established itself as a trusted bridge between Africa and Asia, and digital infrastructure will be essential to strengthening that position. Mauritius Telecom is investing in the connectivity required to support this ambition, from subsea cables and satellite communications to advanced mobile networks and data centers. Today, Mauritius has one of the strongest digital foundations in Africa, with full fiber connectivity across households and expanding 5G coverage. The next opportunity is moving beyond telecommunications into becoming an infrastructure provider that enables intelligence through areas such as AI, sovereign digital capabilities, and digital finance. Mauritius' size allows it to adopt and test new technologies quickly, creating a platform where companies, investors, and regional partners can collaborate, innovate, and build the solutions of the future."

### Désiré Vencatachellum
Chief Executive Officer, Financial Services Commission Mauritius

"Mauritius should not be viewed simply through its geography. The country has become an international financial center with a global outlook and strong connections across Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Financial services today are one of the largest contributors to the Mauritian economy, and our ambition is to continue building a platform that combines trust, innovation, and international competitiveness. Mauritius offers strong institutions, an independent legal system, multilingual talent, and an enabling regulatory environment that supports business growth while maintaining high standards. We are also pushing forward in areas such as fintech, fund domiciliation, sustainable finance, and cross-border investment structures targeting the African continent. The country's strength comes from its openness, stability, and ability to connect markets while remaining agile enough to adapt to the future of international finance."

### Priscilla Balgobin-Bhoyrul
Managing Partner, Dentons Mauritius

"Mauritius has become an increasingly relevant jurisdiction for international investors because it combines rule of law, political stability, efficient courts, and global connectivity. Investors want reassurance that their investments are protected, and Mauritius offers that confidence through a trusted legal framework and an ultimate court of appeal in the UK. Over the years, the country has built a strong reputation as a launchpad for investment into Africa, but increasingly Mauritius is also becoming a destination for capital, businesses, and families relocating here. The legal system is familiar to many international investors because it combines both civil law and common law traditions, creating a level of comfort and predictability. At the same time, Mauritius continues modernizing its legal and regulatory frameworks around areas such as fintech, arbitration, and financial services to remain aligned with global developments and future opportunities."

# The 188-Year-Old Mauritian Bank Expanding Across Africa

In conversation with Penresa, the CEO of Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB) discusses how the country's oldest banking institution, with nearly two centuries of operation, has built a regional banking network across the Indian Ocean while expanding its corporate and institutional presence in Africa.

**Thierry Hebraud**
CEO, Mauritius Commercial Bank (MCB)

**What drove the transformation of Mauritius Commercial Bank from a domestic bank into a regional financial player?**
The transformation comes from the story of MCB itself. For almost 188 years, the bank has grown alongside the Mauritian economy. Once you become the leading bank in your country, you start asking what the next step is. Thirty years ago, we began expanding across the Indian Ocean by following our clients, starting with Madagascar, then Seychelles, and the Maldives. We also built a joint venture with Société Générale in Réunion Island and Mayotte. Step by step, we became the largest banking group in the Indian Ocean region by size and operations. The second phase of internationalization started more than twelve years ago, around oil and gas, which remains a strategic sector for us as an African bank.

**Why has oil and gas remained such an important sector for the bank?**
We are an African bank, and when we look at fossil fuels and our continent, our strategy is about sustainable growth. Less than 4% of global CO2 emissions come from Africa, yet 600 million Africans still lack access to electricity and energy. For Africa, decarbonization means responsible carbonization because the continent cannot transform itself without affordable and accessible energy. Africa has the youngest population in the world, and by 2050, the population will reach around 2.5 billion people, with a remarkable 60% of Africa's population expected to be under the age of 25. We cannot transform the continent if we continue exporting raw materials and importing finished products. In sectors like mining and agriculture, Africa still exports minerals, cocoa beans, and other commodities for transformation elsewhere. We need to build that transformation capacity inside our own countries, and that shift is already starting to happen across the continent.

**You often speak about value-addition in Africa. Why do you believe this is so critical?**
We need to create more value within the continent itself. Exporting only raw materials means transferring the entire added value elsewhere. Between the raw material and the finished product, the value multiplies enormously. I strongly believe the world is moving toward electrification, and Africa is one of the major suppliers of the minerals needed for that transition. The resources are already here. The question is whether we use them ourselves. But to do that, we need energy. We cannot continue having pressure from developed countries telling Africa to decarbonize immediately when the continent contributes only a very small percentage of global emissions, while 20% of the world's population lives here.

> **"Mauritius Commercial Bank is the largest banking group in the Indian Ocean region by size and operations."**

**Which sectors do you believe will drive Mauritius' economy in the coming years?**
Renewable energy, definitely. Sustainability is key for us. As an island nation, the blue economy is also extremely important. We need to think seriously about logistics, port operations, sustainable fishing, and the broader ocean economy. There has been a lot of discussion around the blue economy over the years, but now we need to move from communication to execution. The blue economy represents around 10% or 11% of our GDP. We believe that it can be doubled. Green economy, digital technologies, and AI are also critical sectors. The challenge for Mauritius is energy capacity because when you speak about AI and digital infrastructure, you are also speaking about data centers. Countries like South Africa, Nigeria, and Egypt are attracting the largest data center investments in Africa because they have larger energy capacity. Mauritius needs to accelerate its energy transition if we want to play a bigger role in these sectors.

**Mauritius continues to position itself as a gateway into Africa. What gives the country that advantage?**
Mauritius has strong advantages as an international financial center connected to Africa. Tax plays a role, of course, but Mauritius' advantages extend far beyond taxation. Political stability, regulatory consistency, and the development of a sophisticated financial sector over the last thirty years have all strengthened the country's positioning. We have strong legal, fiscal, and regulatory expertise. Mauritius operates under international legal standards, and the Privy Council in the UK remains Mauritius' final court of appeal. This is reassuring for international investors operating from Mauritius. One of the country's greatest strengths today is its reputation as a stable and secure jurisdiction. Mauritius is affected by what is happening globally, but geopolitically we are far less exposed than many other jurisdictions.

**How has global uncertainty changed the way companies use Mauritius?**
Covid-19 accelerated this shift. During the pandemic, some multinational groups started using Mauritius as a procurement and financial flow hub. Before Covid-19, many of these operations were concentrated in places like Singapore. But companies realized that concentrating operations in a single jurisdiction created vulnerability. What is happening globally today continues to reinforce this thinking. Companies are not necessarily exiting one jurisdiction completely for another, but they are diversifying geographically and using multiple centers for organizing business flows, procurement, and cash management. Mauritius is very well positioned for that diversification trend.

**How important is trade finance and cross-border banking to MCB's African strategy?**
Trade finance is one of the key pillars of our African strategy because trade remains central to the continent's long-term transformation. In 2024, we were named The Banker's African Bank of the Year, reflecting the deep sector expertise we have built across areas such as trade finance, energy, and corporate and institutional banking. We focus on areas where

we can bring specialized expertise and added value rather than competing directly with local banks in their domestic markets. International banks have progressively reduced their presence across many African markets, particularly in more complex sectors and transactions. That created gaps which African corporates and multinational companies still need support to fill. Mauritius gives us a strong platform because we have access to reasonably priced funding thanks to the country's investment-grade positioning and the sophistication of our financial sector. That allows us to structure transactions and channel funding into African projects and businesses. Trade corridors between Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Gulf are also evolving rapidly. More African companies are expanding regionally, and there is increasing demand for banking partners capable of supporting cross-border operations, treasury management, and trade flows. We see ourselves as part of that broader transformation.

**How do you see Mauritius competing with other international financial centers?**
Mauritius has strong advantages as an international financial center connected to Africa. Political stability, regulatory quality, legal certainty, and financial expertise are extremely important. Mauritius has spent decades building a sophisticated ecosystem around banking, legal services, compliance, and international structuring. One of our major strengths is that Mauritius continues to be perceived as a stable and secure jurisdiction. In the current geopolitical and economic environment, that matters more than ever. Investors and corporates increasingly want diversification. They do not want all operations concentrated in a single jurisdiction anymore. Covid-19 accelerated that trend because companies realized how vulnerable centralized structures could become during periods of disruption. We saw multinational groups begin using Mauritius more actively as a procurement and financial flow hub. Previously many of those functions were concentrated in places such as Singapore. Today companies are diversifying geographically, and Mauritius is well positioned within that shift because of its stability, geographic positioning, and strong regulatory environment. At the same time, competition is increasing globally. Dubai remains a major international financial center, and several African jurisdictions are also trying to strengthen their own financial ecosystems. For Mauritius, maintaining credibility, regulatory standards, and investment-grade positioning remains essential.

**How do you see Africa's financial and digital transformation evolving?**
Africa remains one of the world's most dynamic environments for financial innovation. Because many traditional systems were underdeveloped, the continent has moved directly toward more modern forms of payment and digital finance. Africa is very open to models such as stablecoins, crypto, and digital payment systems. At the same time, Africa still trades far too little with itself. Intra-African trade remains below 20%, compared to around 60% in Asia and 70% in Europe. Yet the continent has the resources to become far more self-sufficient. Africa has enormous agricultural capacity and some of the largest arable land reserves in the world. Businesses are increasingly recognizing this, and the agro-food sector is moving in the right direction, with international groups working alongside local farmers to improve quality, expand processing capacity, and develop regional supply chains.

**MCB has become increasingly active in renewable energy financing. What role does the bank want to play in the energy transition?**
We strongly believe the energy transition must accelerate. Private sector actors are moving faster than public institutions in many cases, both in Mauritius and across Africa. We recently signed a US$100 million funding line with Proparco and DEG to finance renewable energy and climate-related projects. We had already deployed a 10-billion-rupee financing line with favorable conditions for renewable energy projects, and that line has now been fully utilized. We are increasing it from 10 billion to 25 billion rupees. What is encouraging is that the private sector no longer needs to be convinced about this agenda. Companies understand that sustainability is directly connected to their long-term survival. Africa has resources and capacity, but large-scale transition projects require long-term financing.

**What is MCB's strategic vision for the next five years?**
We published our Vision 2030 last year, and it is built around three pillars. The first pillar is becoming a leading bank in our home market. Scale alone is no longer enough. A leading bank is one that clients actively choose because they trust the quality and consistency of what it delivers. That means investing heavily in innovation, customer experience, and digital transformation. The second pillar is becoming a top-tier corporate and investment banking and private banking institution in Africa. We are already active in markets such as Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, Dubai, and Paris. We are now planning expansion into West Africa, probably through Abidjan, and we will likely establish a stronger presence in London as well. The third pillar is what we call winning in the workplace. We need to continue developing our people, improving training, and preparing our teams for the next phase of growth.

**How important is innovation to maintaining MCB's leadership position?**
Innovation is absolutely critical because banking is changing very rapidly. Clients today expect quality service, responsiveness, digital tools, and personalized experiences. That is why innovation, customer experience, and digital transformation are central pillars of our Vision 2030 strategy. We are investing significantly in AI, technology infrastructure, and digital banking capabilities while also strengthening internal governance and operational efficiency. At the same time, we do not believe technology should replace relationships. Banking remains a people-driven business, particularly in Africa, where trust and long-term partnerships are essential. AI should help us improve service quality, automate repetitive tasks, and give employees more time to focus on clients and advisory work. We are also seeing a major transformation in payments and financial innovation across Africa. Because traditional systems were less developed in many markets, the continent has been able to adopt newer technologies more rapidly. Mobile payments, digital banking, and alternative financial systems are expanding quickly. Africa has the opportunity to leapfrog certain legacy systems and move directly toward more modern financial infrastructure.

**How is MCB approaching artificial intelligence internally?**
We have already recruited a new Chief Information Officer and Chief Experience Officer as part of the bank's transformation agenda. We now want to build a very clear AI strategy with concrete use cases across every department of the bank. The objective is to improve service quality, customer experience, and operational efficiency. The purpose is not to reduce staff numbers. It is to free people from repetitive tasks so they can spend more time building meaningful relationships with clients. Over the last twenty years of digital transformation, one thing the corporate world lost was personal connection with clients. We want to bring that relationship back where it matters, and AI can help us do that by giving people more time.

**What final message would you give to international investors considering Mauritius?**
Come to Mauritius, of course. Mauritius, as a gateway to Africa, has many strengths in the current environment, and I think it makes a lot of sense today for investors and international businesses to consider, or reconsider, Mauritius within their African strategy.

MCB

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# Connecting African Ambitions to Global Capital

## Drawing on Mauritius' gateway role to Africa, Bank One combines tailored financial solutions and digital transformation to support clients across markets.

**Sunil Ramgobin**
Chief Executive Officer, Bank One Limited

Since its establishment in 2008, Bank One has evolved into a Mauritius-based financial partner connecting African opportunities with international capital flows through tailored banking solutions and regional expertise. Headquartered in Port Louis, the bank serves businesses and individuals across Africa and beyond through a comprehensive offering spanning corporate and investment banking, private banking, wealth management, custody services, consumer banking, and treasury services. Combining strong domestic expertise with cross-border capabilities, Bank One leverages the presence of its shareholders - I&M Group, a key player in East Africa's financial sector, and CIEL Finance, the finance arm of CIEL Group, one of Mauritius's foremost conglomerates - across key markets, including Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Madagascar, and Mauritius. This regional connectivity enables the bank to support clients' growth ambitions while reinforcing Mauritius' position as a trusted international financial centre. "We are a universal bank. We bridge investment flowing from the UK, Europe, the US, and Asia into Africa. Investors look at political stability, the legal system, ease of doing business, and, increasingly, well-regulated international financial centres. Mauritius ticks all the boxes," says Chief Executive Officer Sunil Ramgobin.

Bank One's strategy is centered on delivering specialized, relationship-driven solutions rather than pursuing scale alone. "We want to serve a targeted client base, and we want to serve them well. We are determined to be on top of technology, especially in cybersecurity, data, and compliance frameworks," says Ramgobin.

The bank is also exploring the potential of artificial intelligence to enhance customer insights, optimize processes, and allow employees to focus on higher-value activities while maintaining the personal approach that defines its service model. "When it comes to proper service, human relationships remain at our core: there will be a combination of AI and the human touch," he adds.

Looking ahead, Bank One is focused on expanding opportunities in private banking, wealth management, and corporate and investment banking, with a focus on trade finance, supported by rising investment activity and increasing wealth creation across Africa. "Commodities and trade flows, both within and outside the African continent, represent enormous potential," concludes Ramgobin.

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# Mauritian Resort Redefining Five-Star Hospitality

## Maradiva Villas Resort & Spa's CEO speaks of personalized luxury, sustainability, Mauritian culture, and promoting Mauritius on the global stage.

**Sanjiv Ramdanee**
CEO of Maradiva Villas Resort & Spa and Sands Suites Resort & Spa in Mauritius

**What makes Maradiva Villas different from other luxury resorts in Mauritius?**
It is the only family-owned five-star luxury resort in western Mauritius that operates independently from an international chain. With just sixty-four villas, the resort was deliberately designed to create a far more personal and intimate experience where guests never feel crowded and receive individual attention throughout the property. Personal interaction has always been central to the resort's philosophy, with team members regarded as family and hospitality built around a sense of belonging. From a business perspective, it would have made more sense to build something much larger, but that was never the idea. My father wanted to create something truly special back in 2004.

**Sustainability appears to be a major part of the property. How have you approached that?**
Only one-third of the land is covered with villas. We invested heavily in landscaping and now have around 150 different types of plants across the property, which attract endemic birds and allow guests to connect with Mauritius' unique biodiversity. The idea was always for the villas to blend into the greenery so that nature became the dominant presence. We also used natural stone layouts and woodwork throughout the property to maintain that natural feel.

**How important is Mauritian culture in the guest experience at Maradiva?**
We grew up with all the different communities that make up the Mauritian population, and we want our guests to experience that culture as well. This is how Mauritians celebrate each other's festivals. For Eid, my Muslim friends invite me for biryani. For Holi, we celebrate with color. For Diwali, we exchange cakes. Chinese New Year is the same. Whatever my Mauritian friends of Chinese origin give me, we share with the guests staying here. It is about participating in Mauritius' cultural events.

**You have been promoting both Maradiva and Mauritius internationally. Why is that important to you?**
We have represented Maradiva and Mauritius at the Cannes Film Festival, Royal Ascot, and the Golden Globes. We attended these events to engage with personalities directly to increase international visibility at the highest level. We want Mauritius to be recognized on the world stage through high-end and exclusive global venues. I have personally attended the Golden Globes for around ten years and had the opportunity to meet actors and public figures while talking to them about Mauritius. It is primordial to have both Maradiva and Mauritius on the international stage.

# Air Mauritius Strengthens Its Position as National Carrier

Air Mauritius is restructuring its network, service model, and operations to expand direct connectivity, strengthen market share, and position itself as the preferred carrier for travel to and from Mauritius.

**Andre Viljoen**
Chief Executive Officer,
Air Mauritius

Air Mauritius is rebuilding its airline model around a single operational objective that defines every strategic decision, which is to become the preferred airline for travel to and from Mauritius through direct connectivity, service quality, and national identity. The airline operates as the flag carrier of Mauritius with its hub at Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam International Airport and a fleet of 12 aircraft serving international destinations across Europe, Africa, Asia, and Australasia. It was incorporated in 1967 ahead of independence to establish international trade links, support tourism flows, enable exports, and build a self-sustaining national carrier. "Air Mauritius now operates approximately 11,800 flights per year, offers 1.9 million seats, and connects Mauritius to 13 direct destinations with extended access to more than 100 destinations through partnerships," says CEO Andre Viljoen. The airline carried 1.7 million passengers and 38,000 tons of cargo in the 2025–2026 financial year, maintaining its role in passenger mobility and trade logistics.

Air Mauritius employs around 2,500 Mauritians and operates as one of the country's largest employers and a core participant in national economic activity. The airline contributes approximately 5 percent of Mauritius's GDP, excluding multiplier effects generated across tourism, logistics, and related sectors. Viljoen defines the airline's role through national economic participation and international representation. "With every ticket sold, the revenue flows directly into the country. We are the brand ambassador," he says.

Air Mauritius transports approximately 35 percent of total passenger traffic into Mauritius and provides around 38 percent of seat capacity to the country's aviation system. The airline supports tourism flows that reached 1.4 million arrivals in 2025, supported by air connectivity across key markets. It enables exports by transporting high-value goods such as seafood, textiles, and pharmaceuticals, linking Mauritian producers to international markets.

Air Mauritius maintains regular air services between Mauritius and Rodrigues, ensuring passenger movement and cargo delivery for essential services. The airline operates within a network of 64 bilateral air service agreements that provide access to global aviation markets. It extends its reach through 10 codeshare partnerships and 47 interline agreements, enabling seamless connections across international hubs. The airline has returned to profitability in the 2025–2026 financial year, reporting positive results across both quarterly and half-year performance periods.

> **"Our objective is to rank among the top 20 airlines in the world."**

Andre Viljoen directs the airline's transformation through a structured set of strategies that define operations, network expansion, service delivery, and governance. The airline has initiated a full network redesign through an external review process that evaluates global markets for direct connectivity based on demand, distance, and commercial viability. It models each potential route using traffic data, revenue forecasts, and cost projections to determine viability within a ten-year planning horizon.

Air Mauritius links network expansion directly to fleet development, with confirmed orders for Airbus A350-900 aircraft scheduled for delivery between 2026 and 2028. "We operate a modern fleet that includes Airbus A350-900, Airbus A330 Neo variants, and ATR aircraft for regional operations," notes Viljoen. Fleet planning determines route frequency, destination coverage, and long-term operational capacity. Viljoen defines network scale through frequency and reach. He states, "An airline grows when it expands its destinations and increases frequency." Air Mauritius defines its identity through a national positioning framework articulated as "We are Mauritius," integrating brand, service, and operational presence into a unified concept. "Your first taste of Mauritius is when you get on board Air Mauritius," Viljoen says, noting that the onboard experience introduces passengers to the country's hospitality, service culture, and identity from the moment they step onto the aircraft. The airline employs an all-Mauritian cabin crew, maintaining a consistent service identity rooted in local culture. "All our crew are Mauritian," Viljoen states. "We call it authentic service from the heart," he adds.

The airline structures its service delivery around cultural authenticity, with service interactions shaped by local norms of hospitality and interpersonal engagement. "This is not rehearsed service. It is authentic, and it comes from the culture of our people," says Viljoen. Air Mauritius integrates service training methodologies that prioritize customer expectations and adaptive service delivery. The airline evaluates service performance using Skytrax and Apex rating systems, targeting improvements in global rankings and customer satisfaction metrics.

Air Mauritius holds a four-star Skytrax rating and aims to reach top-tier global rankings within its service category. Viljoen states, "Our objective is to rank among the top 20 airlines in the world," says Viljoen, noting that the company has introduced a values-based leadership framework built on accountability, honesty, care, respect, and courage. The airline applies structured leadership development programs to strengthen internal management capacity and operational execution. It applies behavioral standards and feedback systems to align workforce performance with organizational objectives.

The airline incorporates an ESG strategy into its governance structure, with sustainability oversight integrated at

the board level. The Board approved a Sustainability Roadmap for 2025–2026 that includes operational efficiency measures, reduction of single-use plastics, and electrification of ground equipment.
The airline is implementing onboard weight optimization and energy efficiency initiatives to reduce operational emissions.
Air Mauritius is developing a Sustainability Master Plan for 2026–2030 aligned with national climate commitments and international aviation standards. It is assessing sustainable aviation fuel adoption and circular economy practices, such as waste recycling. The airline collaborates with international partners, including Acciona and the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub, to structure climate finance solutions. It is designing a voluntary customer contribution platform linked to nationally endorsed environmental projects.
Air Mauritius participates in regional forums focused on climate-aligned aviation transitions for Small Island Developing States. The airline integrates sustainability reporting into its governance processes, ensuring compliance with regulatory frameworks and stakeholder expectations.
Viljoen defines the airline's long-term direction through expansion in destinations, increased flight frequency, and sustained profitability. "Our growth will come from expanding destinations and strengthening our market share," he notes.

Air Mauritius integrates digital systems into its customer interface through an online platform and mobile application that manage bookings, seat selection, and boarding pass issuance. The airline provides real-time flight updates and notifications through these systems, enabling passengers to track schedules and receive operational information before departure. The platform also supports special service requests, including assistance for passengers with reduced mobility and specific medical requirements.
The airline operates the Kestrelflyer frequent flyer program, which allows passengers to earn and redeem miles across flights and partner services. The program includes tiered membership levels that provide access to priority check-in, boarding, and lounge services. Members accumulate points through travel activity and partner transactions, which can be redeemed for flight upgrades and additional services.
Air Mauritius delivers ground experience through dedicated lounge facilities at its hub, including the Amédée Maingard Lounge. The lounge provides business workspaces, dining services, and rest areas for premium passengers. These facilities support pre-flight preparation and transit requirements for both business and leisure travelers.
The airline configures its cabin product across Business Class and Economy Class, with aircraft-specific layouts. Long-haul aircraft such as the Airbus A350-900 include lie-flat seats in Business Class and integrated in-flight entertainment systems across cabins. The airline serves onboard meals that include Mauritian cuisine alongside international menu options, maintaining consistency with its national identity.
Air Mauritius provides seatback entertainment systems with access to films, music, and digital content on long-haul routes. Selected aircraft offer onboard connectivity services and digital content access through personal devices. These systems operate across multiple flight durations and route categories. The airline structures its cargo operations to handle perishable goods, pharmaceuticals, and high-value shipments. Cargo services include temperature-controlled logistics and time-sensitive handling processes, supporting export industries that rely on rapid delivery cycles.
Air Mauritius operates under international aviation safety frameworks and maintains compliance with industry regulatory standards. The airline conducts regular operational audits and safety checks to ensure adherence to global aviation requirements. It aligns its operational strategy with national economic priorities through tourism development, export facilitation, and global connectivity. The airline positions itself as the preferred carrier for Mauritius by combining direct access, consistent service delivery, and a unified national identity across all operations.

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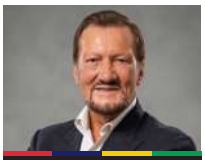
# Unlocking Global Opportunities Through Inclusive Finance

## Expanding access to wealth, mobility, and development across borders.



**Graeme Robertson**
Founder, Intrasia Group

**Neil Kleinsmith**
CEO, Intrasia Wealth

**Aslam Kanowah**
CEO, Intrasia Management

**Herman Suhirman**
General Manager, Intrasia Corporate Services

From its base in Mauritius, Intrasia Group is positioning itself as a globally connected financial services platform with a clear mission to broaden access to wealth creation. Chairman Graeme Robertson describes the company as "a one-stop shop," bringing together fund structuring, wealth management and corporate solutions under one roof.

The structure is straightforward, but the reach is not. At its core sits a management company that builds and oversees family offices, funds and trusts, supported by a growing wealth management division with offices in London, Dubai, Cape Town and Singapore. From Mauritius, the group connects capital to opportunities across Africa and other high-growth markets, using the island's position as a stable financial hub.

What sets the business apart is its inclusive approach. "We don't chase the ultra-high net worth. We look at the mass affluent," Robertson says. The shift is deliberate. With minimum investment thresholds starting at US$50,000, the company is opening the door to professionals often overlooked by larger institutions, giving them access to the same tools used at the top end.

The model extends beyond finance. Intrasia also provides corporate services, from due diligence to global citizenship solutions and transaction advisory. "We are formed basically to provide a whole range, a comprehensive range of services for development," Robertson explains, pointing to a model that simplifies complex cross-border processes for clients operating internationally.

Thee is also a forward-looking edge. The group is paying close attention to shifting investor behaviour, particularly among Generation Z, while developing initiatives to support female entrepreneurs across Africa. As Robertson puts it, "Money makes money, and that is what we do, but we have got to help society at the same time."

It is this balance, between commercial focus and broader purpose, that defines Intrasia's direction, making global finance more accessible without losing sophistication.

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# Mauritius' Next Chapter as a Financial Platform

## Country Head of Alter Domus Mauritius discusses technology, talent development, and the country's evolving role as a global financial platform.

**Christopher Pang,**
Country Head,
Alter Domus Mauritius

**How do you lead a business in an industry where technology and investor expectations are evolving simultaneously?**

Technology is increasingly important, but people remain just as critical. Advanced systems cannot deliver results without the right expertise, while strong talent without the right technology will struggle to scale efficiently. At Alter Domus, we invest in both: developing our people through continuous training while accelerating AI and automation. Clients expect real-time reporting, deeper data analysis, and stronger communication tools. Investors also want administrators to play a more strategic role, understanding their business while managing operational and compliance requirements.

**AI is reshaping process-driven industries. Where do you see the greatest disruption and value?**

AI is already improving efficiency and productivity. We use it daily to analyse documents, process information, and enhance workflows. AI is also transforming repetitive administrative processes through automated document scanning and data population. That said, strong governance is essential supported by clear accountability, robust controls, and well-defined guidelines on how AI is implemented and used.

**Mauritius continues to face the emigration of skilled workers. How important is local talent?**

Local talent remains fundamental. Mauritius continues to face professionals leaving for international exposure and career advancement. At the same time, the country has invested in building capabilities in fund accounting, administration and compliance through recognized training porograms delivered by a range of recognized institutions.

At Alter Domus Mauritius, we develop university graduates through practical experience and structured training. Our international mobility programme also creates cross-border development opportunities, helping people build global careers while staying connected to Mauritius.

**What will strengthen Mauritius' position as a global financial hub?**

Mauritius remains attractive due to its political stability, strong legal framework, and cost competitiveness. To remain competitive, the country must continue improving the ease of doing business. Technology adoption will also play an increasingly central role in the future financial landscape, and Mauritius should continue to expand its use of digital tools across the sector. Finally, developing and retaining skilled local talent must remain a priority to sustain Mauritius' position as a leading International Financial Center.

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# Expanding Mauritius' Financial Reach

## Driving financial inclusion and innovation while unlocking new growth opportunities for SMEs across Africa.

**Ambrish Maharahaje**
Group Chief Executive Officer, Cim Finance

Over the past forty years, Cim Finance has evolved into one of Mauritius' most established non-bank financial institutions, serving 350,000 clients spanning consumer lending, SME finance, leasing, factoring, insurance agency services, credit cards, and payments. Accompanying customers through different stages of life, from young professionals taking their first financial steps to families seeking tailored solutions, the company continues to advance financial inclusion through innovation and accessibility.

"Our greatest differentiator is the proximity to our clients," observes Group CEO Ambrish Maharahaje. "We have around one hundred counters across Mauritius, many operating beyond normal business hours, while also investing heavily in digital channels that allow clients to manage their accounts remotely."

Cim Finance supports households and businesses while maintaining connections across key sectors. Building on this experience, the group is extending its impact beyond Mauritius through Loinette Capital, a specialist platform focused on financing high-potential SMEs across Sub-Saharan Africa. Unlike traditional lenders, Loinette combines asset-backed financing with after-sales support structures designed to preserve equipment value and maximize productivity. The company focuses on equipment-intensive sectors, including infrastructure, logistics, agriculture, and industrial services. "We are not simply a credit provider to SMEs who the acquire machines; we also support the ecosystems that keep them working," explains Loinette Capital CEO Derek Crandon.

Cim Finance was the first institution in Mauritius to issue and list a green bond and has developed a regulated green financing framework supporting investments in electric vehicles and solar energy projects. Alongside its sustainability leadership, the company is one of the few non-bank financial institutions in Sub-Saharan Africa to hold both Mastercard and Visa franchises for issuing and acquiring, enabling it to partner with banks to offer payment solutions. "We introduced the first Mastercard cashback card in Mauritius, and it has been very well received. Our ambition is to keep broadening our offerings beyond lending," says Maharahaje.

For Crandon, the future of the sector lies in helping investors better understand African markets, asset performance, and opportunities where long-term value can be created. "Mauritius should evolve from being merely a gateway for capital into becoming a partner in performance and value creation."

Cim finance LOINETTE CAPITAL

c/r Edith Cavell & Mère Barthélemy Streets, Port-Louis, Mauritius
www.cimfinance.mu

# How Mont Choisy Is Redefining Integrated Living in Mauritius

Mont Choisy Group CEO Vincent Hardy discusses smart cities, sustainable development, and why Mauritius is increasingly attracting global investors seeking more than a second home.

**Vincent Hardy**
Group CEO & Executive Director, Mont Choisy Group

**What are Mont Choisy Group's main business activities?**
The group operates across four core business pillars that support our long-term vision of building an integrated and sustainable ecosystem in the north of Mauritius.
The first is property development, which remains central to our activities. Through our smart city and integrated development strategy, we are creating mixed-use communities that combine residential, commercial, retail, healthcare, leisure, and lifestyle components within a carefully planned environment.
The second pillar is agriculture. Alongside sugarcane cultivation, we are exploring more sustainable and technology-driven farming practices in response to the environmental and water challenges facing the northern region of the island.
The third is our commercial and asset management cluster. The group owns and manages strategic commercial assets, including a shopping mall and a medical clinic operated under a long-term lease agreement with C-Care, a leading regional healthcare operator. This segment provides stable recurring income while supporting the wider ecosystem.
The fourth pillar is leisure and lifestyle. This includes our championship golf course, which hosts international tournaments such as DP World Tour and Sunshine Tour events, as well as equestrian facilities and other lifestyle amenities that strengthen Mont Choisy's positioning as a premium destination.

**How has the market responded to Mont Choisy's developments?**
The response has been highly encouraging, reflecting both the strength of our offering and growing confidence in Mauritius as an investment destination.
During the Covid-19 period, we sold 159 serviced plots to the local market in just eleven days. Internationally, more than 150 premium residential plots within our golf estate were sold within three months, demonstrating strong demand for integrated lifestyle developments.
Over the past 12 to 24 months, many of these investments have appreciated significantly, with some properties nearly doubling in value. This reflects both the resilience of the Mauritian property market and investor confidence in Mont Choisy's long-term vision.
Building on this momentum, we are expanding our commercial and retail offering along the Boulevard while working with strategic partners and co-developers to create a balanced ecosystem that supports both international investors and local entrepreneurs.

> **"The question today is: if you could live anywhere in the world, where would you choose to live?"**

**Mauritius is attracting increasing international attention. How does that benefit Mont Choisy and the wider economy?**
Mauritius has gained growing recognition as a trusted destination for business, investment, and lifestyle, creating opportunities for both Mont Choisy Group and the wider economy.
For Mont Choisy, this translates into increasing interest from international investors, entrepreneurs, and professionals seeking a stable, well-regulated environment in which to live, work, and invest. Increasingly, many are choosing Mauritius not simply as a second-home destination but as their primary place of residence.
This trend has accelerated as greater workplace flexibility and digital connectivity allow people to live and work from almost anywhere. Mauritius' combination of political stability, safety, connectivity, climate, and quality of life continues to attract international families and business owners.
As more residents settle permanently, they contribute to the economy by employing people, starting businesses, using local services, and paying taxes. What often begins as a property investment evolves into long-term economic and social value creation.
Investors are not only evaluating developments themselves. They are also assessing a country's institutions, stability, regulatory framework, and ease of doing business. It is therefore essential for Mauritius to continue strengthening its international reputation and maintaining a competitive, investor-friendly environment.

**How does the group balance heritage with modern development?**
We believe heritage and modern development should evolve together. While creating a modern urban ecosystem, we remain committed to preserving the character and identity that make Mont Choisy unique, and we are proud of the estate's more than 200-year history.
We have restored key heritage assets and continue to maintain traditions rooted in the estate's past, including our historic heritage home, equestrian stables, agricultural activities, small poultry operations, and traditional firewood production. While these may seem modest within a large-scale development, they reflect the values and heritage that define our community. Our objective is to transition sustainably while preserving the legacy that has shaped Mont Choisy for generations.

**What is the company's long-term vision?**
Mont Choisy's long-term vision is centered on building a diversified and resilient business ecosystem anchored by our strategic land bank and asset base.
Our objective is to gradually transform our land portfolio into diversified recurring-income assets across multiple sectors. We strongly believe in the "live, work, and play" model, built around 15-minute city principles and soft mobility solutions that encourage walkability, cycling, and reduced reliance on cars.
More broadly, we believe Mauritius has evolved far beyond its traditional image as a tourism destination. Today it offers modern infrastructure, quality healthcare, international business services, commercial hubs, and integrated communities where people can live, work, invest, and build long-term futures.

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# Rewriting Africa's Financial Future

## From Mauritius to East Africa, financial expertise is strengthening debt markets, improving transparency, and helping unlock long-term investment across the continent.

**Saurav Chatterjee,**
Director & CEO,
CareEdge Africa

**What drew you to CareEdge and the world of credit ratings?**
I come from a finance background and developed an interest in credit ratings during my postgraduate studies. After working in corporate banking with an international bank in India, I joined CareEdge Ratings to deepen my understanding of credit and risk assessment. In 2016, I moved to Mauritius to lead CareEdge Africa and help support the development of the local ratings industry.

**Why did CareEdge Ratings venture into Africa?**
CareEdge Group established CareEdge Africa in Mauritius in 2014 to support the development of local currency capital markets across the continent. The goal was to bring the group's experience from India's financial markets to African debt markets and banking systems at a time when credit ratings were still relatively new in many economies.
Africa's growing infrastructure investment, trade financing needs, and expanding capital markets pointed to significant long-term potential, but many markets still lacked sufficient credit transparency and independently verified risk assessment.

**Why are local currency bond markets important for Africa?**
Local currency bond markets help address one of Africa's key structural financing challenges. Many African corporates earn revenue in local currency but borrow in hard currency, exposing them to exchange-rate risk. Expanding local currency financing can help reduce that mismatch while mobilizing domestic savings for long-term development.
Africa's infrastructure financing gap remains substantial, yet African institutional investors manage more than USD 1 trillion in assets. Expanding the availability of rated corporate instruments can help channel more of that capital into African growth opportunities, reduce reliance on external financing, and improve funding diversification across African economies. Deeper bond markets also help create more stable long-term funding channels for infrastructure, industrial expansion, and private-sector growth across multiple sectors and regional economies.

> **"We are not building something for short-term profit. We want to help develop systems that can sustain growth."**

**You often say Africa has a trust problem rather than a capital problem. What do you mean?**
Africa is not short of capital. Banking assets, pension funds, and insurance pools across the continent are substantial, but institutional capital only moves at scale when investors have confidence in the quality of information and risk disclosure available to them.
That is where credit rating agencies play an important role. By improving transparency, comparability, and independent risk assessment, ratings help investors allocate capital with greater confidence. Without credible disclosure standards, even strong investment opportunities often struggle to attract long-term institutional funding.

**How is CareEdge different from global rating agencies?**
Our parent company in India brings more than 30 years of experience in one of the world's largest emerging markets. What differentiates us is the combination of global analytical standards with local African market understanding.
Independence is central to the ratings process. Analytical functions are fully separated from the commercial side, and all ratings are assigned by independent rating committees. In our industry, credibility is everything.

**What is your long-term vision for CareEdge Africa?**
Our vision is to build a trusted African institution with strong local analytical expertise across the continent. We want to strengthen capital market infrastructure, support investor confidence, and broaden understanding of African credit opportunities.
Africa's infrastructure needs, energy transition, expanding middle class, and AfCFTA-driven trade growth all point to significant long-term investment potential. Our role is to help make those opportunities investable through greater transparency and credible risk assessment.

CareEdge RATINGS AFRICA
A subsidiary of CARE Ratings Limited, India

Foresight Backed by Expert Insights

CARE Ratings (Africa) Private Limited (CRAF) is incorporated in Mauritius to provide credit ratings and related services in Mauritius and other geographies in Africa.

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# Inside Mauritius' Rise as Africa's Cross-Border Finance Hub

Executives across banking, finance and investment services in Mauritius highlight the country's evolution from a sugar-based economy into one of Africa's leading financial centers.

**Sangeetha Ramkelawon**
CEO, BCP Bank

"BCP Bank Mauritius is part of a large Moroccan banking group with operations across Africa, and our mandate is to promote trade finance and cross-border lending activities across the continent. Mauritius is where we see opportunities to grow the international financial center because the country has built a strong reputation for understanding and adapting to investor requirements for doing business in Africa. We are leveraging Mauritius as a bridge between Africa, Europe and Asia to attract investors looking at opportunities across the continent, whether in infrastructure, sustainable finance or trade. We are number one in Africa in terms of ease of doing business, number one in the Global Financial Centers Index, and we are investment grade. But once you are number one, you do not want to fall. It is like a crown. We have to remain investor-friendly while maintaining strong compliance frameworks so investors continue trusting the jurisdiction. The only way we can move to the next level is through innovation, digitalisation, attracting talent and improving execution."

**Prashant Kumar Babhale**
Managing Director & CEO, SBI Mauritius Ltd

"State Bank of India Mauritius is promoted by State Bank of India, which is a leading bank in India as well as in the world, with operations in 29 countries and 200 offices. SBI Mauritius was opened in 1989 with an objective of catering to international or global banking business, and later expanded into retail banking to build a stronger connection with the local Mauritian economy. Today, we operate 14 branches and 20 ATMs in Mauritius with a customer strength of more than 80,000. Our focus is now more on SMEs and local corporates so that we can support and be part of the growth story of Mauritius, while continuing to provide retail banking services to the wider population. At the same time, Africa is going to be a future growth engine, and Mauritius gives us the readiness to understand the business environment, the opportunities, and the risks across the continent. SBI Mauritius is already a universal bank offering retail, corporate, SME, and global banking services, and we want to make Africa's growth story part of SBI Mauritius' growth story."

**Admassu Tadesse**
President & CEO, Trade and Development Bank (TDB)

"The Trade and Development Bank (TDB) Group is a diversified multinational development finance group. We have a bank, an insurance company, asset management companies, a concessional fund and grant-making entity, and an academy that does capacity building. We operate in just under thirty countries across Africa, and Mauritius is our headquarters for the group. Mauritius has established itself as a very strong financial services center that enables the rest of the world to come to Africa. About 10% of FDI across Africa comes through Mauritius. Not that the capital necessarily originates here, but Mauritius has become the gateway. Over the past two to three decades, the country has transformed itself from an economy once heavily dependent on sugar into one of Africa's leading financial hubs. Mauritius got the formula right. They understood the importance of governance and the environment of doing business, and they came up with a strategy. They executed. They delivered. They were consistent. They were disciplined."

**Shahed Hoolash**
Managing Director & Partner, Vistra

"Vistra is a global corporate service provider. We are present in over eighty countries with more than ten thousand people globally, from Australia and New Zealand all the way to Brazil. In Africa, we are present in Mauritius and South Africa, and we are looking at growing our presence across the continent. Mauritius has, for a long time, been a business partner for India, and over the last decade, we started looking at Africa as the next growth market. The resources are there, the population is there, and obviously, the growth is going to come from there. We see our role as helping to channel responsible and good capital into the continent. The ability to handhold and assist clients across jurisdictions and across multiple continents is the unique selling point for Vistra. We are present in eighty countries, so the access that we give global corporations is probably unique and unmatched. What we are good at is bringing global investors to investment opportunities and creating the frameworks and structures that allow companies to operate across markets."

# Mauritius and the Business of Living Well

The quality of life in Mauritius has become one of the country's strongest competitive advantages for international investors and professionals.

Maintaining one of Africa's highest per capita income levels, Mauritius has been classified by the World Bank as a high-income economy since 2019. Although the economy faced pressure from the pandemic and climate-related shocks, the country continues to operate on an upper-middle-income foundation while pursuing policies aimed at restoring high-income status.

Located in the southwestern Indian Ocean, Mauritius consistently ranks among the highest-performing countries in Africa across global development indicators. According to the United Nations Development Programme, Mauritius is one of only two sub-Saharan African countries, alongside Seychelles, classified in the "Very High Human Development" category, with an HDI score of 0.806. The country also ranks first in Africa on the Social Progress Index and 56th globally, reflecting strong performance in healthcare, education, personal rights, and basic living conditions. Life expectancy stands at approximately 75 years, supported by an extensive public healthcare system and broad access to medical services. "Mauritius gives you a combination of both a professional environment and a lifestyle built around warmth, hospitality, and quality of living," says Andre Viljoen, CEO of Air Mauritius.

Much of Mauritius's standard of living rests on government-funded social services that reduce major household costs. Mauritian citizens receive free healthcare through public hospitals and clinics across the country. Education is free from pre-primary school through university level, and schooling remains compulsory until the age of 16. The literacy rate exceeds 91%. The government also subsidizes public transportation for students, senior citizens, and people with disabilities, reducing transport costs and improving mobility across the island.

The legal framework remains central to the country's reputation. Mauritius follows a hybrid legal structure combining French civil law and British common law traditions. "Mauritius is one of the great examples of democracy with elections every five years under the Westminster system of government. The courts in Mauritius are generally very impartial. That's why we looked at making Mauritius a hub for the settlement of commercial disputes and arbitration for cross-border investments," says Graeme Robertson, Group Chairman of Intrasia Capital.

The island signed investment protection agreements and double taxation treaties with numerous countries across Africa, Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. Those agreements shaped Mauritius into a preferred jurisdiction for structuring cross-border investments. Investment funds, holding companies, family offices, and multinational firms frequently use Mauritian entities for regional operations.

> **"Mauritius gives you a combination of both a professional environment and a lifestyle built around warmth, hospitality, and quality of living."**
>
> **Andre Viljoen,**
> CEO, Air Mauritius

The framework matters because international investors increasingly seek predictability over scale. The country's banking sector expanded alongside that reputation. Domestic banks, private banks, and pan-African financial institutions operate from Mauritius. Cross-border trade finance continues to grow as African commercial activity deepens between regions. "Mauritius is in an outstanding position as a financial center for Africa," Robertson says. "The opportunity in trade finance and cross-border trade is becoming very prominent."

A residential and lifestyle environment has also emerged in Mauritius that continues to attract internationally mobile professionals. The island maintains relatively strong public infrastructure standards. Roads remain functional across most economic zones. Telecommunications networks support international business operations. Fiber internet coverage expanded significantly over the last decade. International schools operate across major residential districts. Private healthcare services continue expanding through local and foreign investment.

Mauritius also maintains one of Africa's strongest passports. According to the Henley Passport Index, the Mauritian passport ranks 25th globally and provides visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to 147 destinations worldwide. The level of mobility strengthens the country's attractiveness for internationally connected entrepreneurs, investors, and professionals.

Mauritius also benefits from a social composition shaped through centuries of migration and trade. Indian, African, Chinese, and European influences coexist within a relatively integrated commercial culture. English functions as the official language of administration. French dominates much of the business and media. Creole remains widely spoken across everyday life.

The multilingual environment reduces friction for international firms establishing regional operations. Professionals from Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Gulf generally adapt quickly to the business environment because the country already operates through overlapping commercial traditions.

Foreign residency frameworks accelerated that expansion. Investors, retirees, entrepreneurs, and professionals can secure residence permits through property investment, occupation permits, or retirement schemes under defined thresholds. South Africans, Europeans, Indians, East Africans, and increasingly West African entrepreneurs maintain residences on the island.

The quality of life component becomes increasingly important as global wealth becomes more mobile. Investors evaluate healthcare access, air connectivity, climate, education systems, safety, and personal mobility alongside taxation and market access. Mauritius performs strongly across many of those categories. Commute times remain shorter than in many major international business centers. Coastal living remains accessible within short distances from commercial districts, and outdoor recreation forms part of everyday life rather than a seasonal luxury.

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# COMING SOON

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