

IOM, AHRIM and MEXA Strengthen Partnership to Advance Ethical Labour Migration in Mauritius



Port Louis, Mauritius, 4 August 2026 – In a significant step towards strengthening worker protection and supporting Mauritius' growing demand for skilled labour, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the Association of Hoteliers and Restaurants in Mauritius (AHRIM) and the Mauritius Export Association (MEXA) have signed two Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to promote ethical recruitment, fair employment practices aligned with international standards and safer labour migration pathways.

The agreements establish a framework for long-term cooperation between IOM and two of Mauritius' largest employer associations, representing the hospitality and export-oriented manufacturing sectors. Through joint initiatives on ethical recruitment, skills mobility, employer capacity-building and disaster preparedness, the partners will work to strengthen labour standards, protect migrant workers and support sustainable workforce development in Mauritius.

The signing ceremony took place during the official visit of Mr Frantz Celestin, IOM Regional Director for East, Horn and Southern Africa, and formed part of IOM Mauritius' commemoration of 20 years of partnership with the Government of Mauritius.

Delivering the keynote address, Hon. Muhammed Reza Cassam Uteem, Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations, emphasised the importance of collaborative action to ensure that labour migration continues to support the country's development.

"Employers that rely on migrant workers need a system that is predictable, transparent and compliant with international standards. Workers who feel protected and respected are more productive, more stable and more likely to contribute positively to the workplace and to our society," said Hon. Muhammed Reza Cassam Uteem. "Labour migration is no longer a peripheral issue. It is a development necessity that must be managed with foresight, fairness and responsibility. Ethical recruitment is not just a moral imperative; it is an economic one."

Reflecting on the significance of the partnerships, the IOM Regional Director for East, Horn and Southern Africa, said, "Migration works best when it is built on partnership. No single institution can manage migration alone. Governments provide leadership, international organizations bring technical expertise, and the private sector is indispensable in creating decent jobs, driving economic growth and ensuring that recruitment is conducted responsibly."

"These partnerships demonstrate what can be achieved when governments, the private sector and international partners work together towards a shared purpose. Responsible labour mobility is a shared responsibility, and these partnerships provide a stronger framework for turning our common commitment into practical action and lasting results," said Ms Alia Hirji, IOM Chief of Mission for Mauritius and Seychelles.

Heba Cepedevila-Jangeerkhan, Chairperson Mauritius Export Association, highlighted the importance of the agreement for Mauritius' export sector.

"As Mauritius faces growing labour shortages across key sectors, migrant workers have become essential to the country's competitiveness and economic growth. It is our collective responsibility to ensure they are recruited ethically, treated fairly and supported with dignity. Through this partnership with IOM, we are reaffirming our commitment to responsible labour migration that benefits workers, employers and Mauritius as a whole," said Heba Cepedevila-Jangeerkhan, Chairperson Mauritius Export Association

Similarly, Mr Vincent de Marasse Enouf, Chief Human Resources Officer at Constance Hotels and Chairperson of the AHRIM People & Talent Committee, welcomed the partnership.

"Across our sector, migrant workers are increasingly helping us meet labour market challenges. Today, they are part of our teams, our operations and increasingly our future. As employers, we have a role in ensuring that their aspirations are met with fairness, respect and genuine opportunity," said Mr Vincent de Marasse Enouf, Chief Human

Resources Officer at Constance Hotels and Chairperson of the AHRIM People & Talent Committee. "Labour mobility is a shared responsibility. Lasting solutions can only emerge through continued dialogue between employers, government and organisations such as IOM, each bringing its own expertise and perspective."

These Memoranda of Understanding establish a framework for cooperation on ethical recruitment, capacity-building, skills mobility partnerships and disaster preparedness. Through joint initiatives, IOM, AHRIM and MEXA will promote fair recruitment practices aligned with international standards, strengthen employers' understanding of labour standards and migrant worker protection, support dialogue on workforce planning and skills development, and enhance business continuity planning to strengthen resilience across the hospitality and manufacturing sectors.

Mauritius increasingly relies on labour migration to address workforce shortages in key sectors, including manufacturing, hospitality, construction and services. At the same time, the country's exposure to climate-related hazards highlights the importance of ensuring that businesses, workers and communities are better prepared to respond to future risks. Strengthening collaboration between government, employers and international partners is therefore essential to building resilient labour markets and promoting sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

Through these partnerships, IOM, AHRIM and MEXA will work together to strengthen employer capacity, promote fair recruitment, support the protection of migrant workers and contribute to labour mobility frameworks that benefit employers, workers and the Mauritian economy alike. The agreements also reinforce the shared commitment of the three organisations to advancing partnerships that foster decent work, resilient businesses and sustainable development in Mauritius.

About AHRIM

[The Association of Hoteliers and Restaurants in Mauritius \(AHRIM\)](#) is the leading representative body of Mauritius' tourism and hospitality industry. It promotes excellence, sustainability, skills development and responsible employment practices across the sector.

About MEXA

[The Mauritius Export Association \(MEXA\)](#) is the national association representing export-oriented enterprises across manufacturing and services. MEXA works to strengthen the competitiveness, sustainability and responsible growth of Mauritius' export sector.

About IOM

Established in 1951, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) is the leading inter-governmental organization in the field of migration to advance the understanding of migration issues, encourage social and economic development through migration, and uphold the human dignity and well-being of migrants. As the UN Migration Agency, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all and as a key driver for development. For more information, visit IOM's website on www.iom.int

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