

Hungley: Africa must turn its vast potential into value

Réduit, 8 October 2026 - Africa possesses enormous natural and human resources, but the continent must do more to transform these assets into value, opportunity and prosperity for its people, Acting President of the Republic H.E. Jean Yvan Robert Hungley said during a courtesy call by the Chairperson of the African Union (AU) Commission, H.E. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, at the State House on 7 October.

H.E. Hungley stressed that Africa's young and growing population, together with its wealth of natural resources, represents a major opportunity for the continent, provided African countries strengthen their capacity to produce, process and trade within the continent.

Citing rare earths as an example, the Acting President noted that resources currently exported as raw materials could instead be processed and transformed within Africa, creating greater added value before being brought to international markets at competitive prices.

The discussion also focused on the practical conditions needed to deepen African integration. H.E. Hungley emphasised the importance of stronger economic and financial harmonisation across the AU, COMESA and SADC, so that the free movement of goods, services and people can become a tangible reality.

He also highlighted the strategic importance of connectivity, including stronger air and maritime links, and the potential for Mauritius to contribute as a bridge between Africa, Asia and wider international markets. Against the backdrop of disruptions to global supply chains, he pointed to opportunities for Mauritius' port and logistics infrastructure to support more resilient regional and international trade.

For H.E. Hungley, however, integration must rest on more than physical infrastructure. Confidence, integrity, transparency and strong institutions are essential to building an African economic space in which businesses can invest, trade and grow.

The Acting President also expressed his hope for greater peace and stability across regions of the continent affected by conflict, stressing that economic development and human progress cannot be sustained without peace.

H.E. Youssouf, recalling his first visit to Mauritius in 1993, said he had been struck by the country's "*dynamism*" and its vision of economic development. He welcomed Mauritius' contribution to Africa's economic and financial architecture and its role in hosting the Africa Credit Rating Agency.

The Acting President reaffirmed Mauritius' commitment to AU Agenda 2063 and to stronger continental cooperation, including greater South-South collaboration.

For H.E. Hungley, the direction is clear: Africa must harness its resources, invest in its people, create greater value on the continent and strengthen its place in the global economy. "*The time for Africa is now.*"