



Speech of the President of the CUSTOMS HOUSE BROKERS ASSOCIATION
on the occasion of AGA 2010 held on Friday 5th March, 2010 at the seat of Freight Academy
Conference Centre

Dear Colleagues

It is a great pleasure for me to address you on this auspicious occasion.

I am addressing you as President of the Association for the last time as I have already taken my decision not to present myself again as President of the Association. But I present myself for re-election as Committee Member in order not to leave a gap for my successor. I wish to have a smooth transition as there are major challenges ahead.

These five years of Presidency has been very challenging for me personally and was in the period of great reform and has taken much of me and my time.

I can proudly say that the Association has now a new face.

The celebration of 30th Anniversary of the Association in December 2006 has been a major event that has revamped the Association.

On the other hand, this has also created jealousy among other organizations who have used emotion to torpedo the CHBA.

Nevertheless, we managed to keep the spirit.

We succeeded to have a living Management. During my Presidency, Managing Committee has been meeting on a regular basis where important decisions have been analyzed before taking any action.

We are present in every stakeholders meeting such as the Customs, the Port Users Council, the Trade Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Trade Facilitation Committee of the Prime Minister's Office.

Moreover, whenever the need arises, we also meet different authorities to defend the cause of Customs House Brokers even if sometimes not with much satisfaction.

Furthermore, we are shareholders and are represented on the Board of MACCS which is a major challenge to the Community of Brokers.

We created the CHBA Investment Ltd which is a pioneer in our Sector.

We are a full fledged member of the IFCBA and represented in the WCO.

We also form part of the SADC Freight Forwarders Association

Furthermore we are virtually present through our Website which offers a full range of information and facilities. Prescribed forms can be downloaded free of charge for use, of which I invite you to take advantage.

We have a host of principles to adhere to and we should at all cost sticks to the rules governing our job which are:

- Our Mission Statement
- Our Code of Ethics
- Our Standard Trading Conditions

- Our Agency Agreement
- And above all a minimum price policy for our services

These principles will considerably shape our role and equip our members on their rights, duties and responsibilities.

I can proudly announce that our organization has got proper recognition on both national and international level. We now occupy our rightful place in all stakeholders meeting and we are part of all decision making in the sector.

Today, we are well recognized and respected. This has been proved during our Workshop organized on the 12th November 2009 when the Board of Investment and the Mauritius Revenue Authority have paid tribute to us.

For me, this Workshop has been a major achievement. Can you imagine, we succeeded to gather all Customs House Brokers who have been falling apart, together under one roof?

We have realized that our force is when we gather together and speak as one. As our Colleague Renga rightly pointed out that it is not a solution that when we have a dispute among ourselves, we run to the bush and create a parallel Organization. This has proved to be harmful.

Today, I am happy that we can sit together and share our apprehension.

I do not wish to discourage my successor. But I have faced bad times. Jealousy, hatred, mesquineries and calumnies had been my regular plates. It is worse when it comes from your own people.

Today, I appeal to all of you, to learn from our past experience, and to give full support to your future President and his Management Committee. When you have a dispute, settle it instead of going on the road.

Now, I would like to pay special tribute to the Management Committee for their support. Sometimes, you have been very hard to me. But I prefer it that way. Au moins vous m'avez donné la chance de m'expliquer.

Especialement Fanfan, Swaleh, Patrice, Vishwa, etc. Je vous dis merci.

I would also like to thank all those who, in one way or the other, helped me to fulfill my mandate to the best of my capabilities.

I apologize if I have not been able to meet your expectation. Je pars sans rancune. Whatever with the past has gone, the best is always to come.

To end with, I would like to pay special tribute to Tonton Soopramanien who passed away in all indifference. In the past, he has been a landmark as Customs House Broker. He was an Institution in himself. His depart is like a library who has vanished.

On behalf of the Association, I would like to extend my sincere sympathy to his sons, nephew and all those aggrieved by his demise.

May he rest in peace.

Wishing you all the best

Thanking you.

Afzal Delbar
President

5th March 2010