**African Kaizen Award (AKA) 2022 – Award Ceremony**

**Draft Speech by the Executive Director of the NPCC, Mr. Ashit Gungah**

**Conference Room, NPCC – 15 March 2023**

His Excellency, Kawaguchi Shuichiro, Ambassador of Japan,

Mr. Sujoy Busgeeth, Chairman of the NPCC and Council Members,

Mr. Watanabe Shigeo, JICA Aid Coordination Advisor,

The delegation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Japan Productivity Centre (JPC)

Ladies and gentlemen,

Good afternoon,

Let me welcome you all to celebrate the achievements of our two companies, Nabridas and Archemics, that excelled at the 2022 Africa Kaizen Awards. The two companies were the Grand Winners of the last edition of the National Productivity and Quality Convention 2021.

Archemics Ltd, represented Mauritius in the large-scale organisation category at the Africa Kaizen Awards in 2022 and received the 'Excellent Award'. Their project consisted of reviewing the existing formulation of hand sanitizer-Sanigel by their research and development team in line with the guidelines of the World Health Organization.

Nabridas, on its part, received the Prize for Kaizen Achievements. The company focused its productivity and quality related project on the efficient use of raw materials in the manufacture of swimming pools.

Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a matter of pride that almost every company nominated by the NPCC to participate in the Africa Kaizen Award have distinguished themselves in different categories: Froid des Mascareignes in 2020 and Natec and SSS Furniture in 2021.

For the Africa Kaizen Awards 2023, the NPCC will nominate two organisations to represent Mauritius. These two organisations will be selected from the Grand Winners of the National Productivity and Quality Excellence Award (NPQEA) 2022-2023, which has already been launched in December.

The NPQEA aims primarily at fostering a culture of excellence among Mauritian organisations to achieve higher productivity and competitiveness. It will also provide recognition to organisations that are making continuous efforts to improve management and operational practices and identify role models.

Fostering a culture of excellence allows organisations to be forward-looking and proactive. A culture of excellence requires a willingness to invent future by involving everyone. It also supports teams to function as agents of change aiming at continuous improvement.

Ladies and gentlemen, the support of international partners has been crucial to drive the Mauritian productivity and quality movement. We are thankful to the Government of Japan through the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and the Japan International Cooperation Agency for their continuous support.

Under this collaboration, the Japan Productivity Centre (JPC) and Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) have put in place several programmes in Mauritius in terms of training of productivity practitioners and the development of model companies. The NPCC is now collaborating with the JICA to implement Productivity Improvement Programmes in Madagascar.

Presently, a team led by Mr. Ohga from the Japan Productivity Centre is in Mauritius to carry out a survey on monitoring and evaluation and productivity measurement in organisations.

Productivity metrics help with performance management. Moreover, measures of productivity growth and of productivity levels constitute important economic indicators, which help organisations in their decision making process.

I would like to place on record the collaboration of all our partners and stakeholders that believe in the advancement of the productivity movement in Mauritius. We have to walk together in this journey to achieve our goals. As we celebrate our 55th National Day this week, I found this quote by German playwright and poet, Friedrich von Schiller, more so relevant. I quote: “Even the weak become strong when they are united”. End of quote.

Let me end with Congratulating our companies, Nabridas and Archemics for maintaining Mauritius among the league of nations with productive enterprises. Our special thanks go to the Ambassador of Japan and the JICA team for their commitment towards Mauritius.

Thank you for your attention.