**Opening Ceremony**

**Welcome Remarks**

**Mrs. Rukimirana Vastina NSANZE, Chair ALRAESA**

The Honourable Attorney-General of Mauritius, the Honourable Director of Public Prosecutions of Mauritius, the Deputy Solicitor General, the Chairperson of Mauritius Bar Council, the Chairperson of Mauritius Law Reform Commission, Chairpersons of various Law Reform Agencies and their delegations, distinguished ladies and gentlemen, good morning.

It’s a great honor to be here today and participate in this important event. It’s truly wonderful to see representatives from various members of ALRAESA to be here. This in itself is a great demonstration of the collective willpower that we have to promote law reform in our respective countries. On behalf of the Association ALRAESA, and on my own behalf, I am delighted to welcome all of you to the Conference of the Association of Law Reform Agencies of Eastern and Southern Africa.

Let me just recap so that you know where we are coming from and our background. The Association of Law Reform Agencies of Eastern and Southern Africa was formed in Windhoek in Namibia in August 2003. It comprises of 15 Law Reform Agencies of Eastern and Southern Africa, that is Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zanzibar, Zimbabwe, Mauritius, Swaziland, Botswana, Rwanda, and more recently Southern Sudan.

The role of Law Reform Agencies, as we understand it, is to make recommendations for legislative proposals, which take into consideration the views and the socio-economic aspirations of the society, to develop and modernize laws among other things. To achieve this role, ALRAESA was formed to enable us to exchange and share ideas on the best practices in law reform, exchange and share ideas on the development of law, within member States, in accordance with principles of human rights, good governance and rule of law, and collectively contribute to the attainment of the objectives of member agencies. Therefore, this Conference provides a good opportunity for us to share our experiences in law reform and to identify common law reform issues that affect our respective law reform agencies and make recommendations to address them. The Association holds a General Meeting and Conference annually and they bring together various Law Reform Agencies and other stakeholders. Since its establishment, the Association has held several conferences, the last one having been held in Uganda in 2014. So, we have not had a Conference since that time due to unavoidable circumstances which I won’t get into. We have, as participants, a number of expectations out of this Conference.

I know from the program that we will discuss various topics. I trust the presentations will highlight the key issues on the role of Law Reform in Development. The expectations of participants from this Conference are high. I expect participants from their respective agencies and institutions present here, to make a thorough presentation, with a view to making recommendations to enhance their reform processes. I therefore request all participants in this Conference to commit your time and participate effectively during these two days so that we can collectively live up to the expectations.

I would like to end by thanking the Mauritius Law Reform Commission for their warm hospitality and for organizing this Conference and the EXCO Meeting. I want to thank all the participants who are here today for accepting to be part of this process and for committing your time to be here. It is therefore my pleasure and privilege once again to welcome you to this conference and I wish you all fruitful deliberations. Thank you very much.