

Speech on the occasion of the launch of The new Automated Trading System (ATS)

delivered by
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19 May 2022
Le Sirius, Labourdonnais Hotel, Port Louis

Hon. Mahen Kumar Seeruttun, Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance
Mr Sarwansingh Purmessur, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Financial Services and Good
Governance,
Mr. Dhaneshwurnath Thakoor, Chief Executive of the Financial Services Commission,
Mr. Dipak Chummun, Chairman of the Stock Exchange of Mauritius,
Mr. Nitish Benimadhu, Vice Chairman of the Stock Exchange of Mauritius,
Mr. Zack Hodgson, Chairman of Securities and Trading Technology,
Our distinguished representatives of STT,
Directors of SEM,
Captains of the Capital Markets Industry,
My colleagues from SEM and CDS,
Members of the press,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good evening,

1. On behalf of the SEM, it gives me immense pleasure to welcome you all to tonight's event to mark the launch of SEM's brand new Automated Trading platform, Avento and its state-of-the-art online trading app, mySEM.

2. 21 years ago, we organized a similar event when SEM launched its first Automated Trading platform, SEMATS. That was indeed a defining moment as it allowed SEM to make history by becoming the first Exchange in Africa to set up a fully automated Exchange platform from trading to clearing and settlement.
3. Today, 21 years after, we have reconvened to celebrate another landmark event, another defining moment with the launch of Avento and mySEM on-line trading app. Avento is a trading platform powered by STT, a global provider of Exchange solutions and financial markets technology.
4. Why have we shifted, from SEMATS, which has served us well during the last 2 decades to embrace Avento and how will Avento add value to SEM's current and future plans?
5. Our decision to move from SEMATS to Avento has been driven by three key factors:
 - i. First, a generous grant given to us by AfDB to fund the implementation phase of the system.
 - ii. Second, our relentless drive to innovate, embrace new state-of-the-art technology so as to better service our stakeholders, investors, issuers, regulators, data vendors, etc.
 - iii. Third and more importantly, Avento will without any doubt facilitate SEM's pursuance of its differentiation and internationalisation strategy.
6. As you may be aware, ladies and gentlemen, the SEM embarked some 12 years ago on a new strategic journey to move away from its historical domestic equity-centric focus to a multi-asset class internationalised exchange focus.
7. A number of transformational changes were brought to our operational and regulatory framework which have all helped us succeed in our internationalisation venture and has allowed us to list and trade a wide variety of new products like Depository Receipts, Structured products, Exchange-Trade funds and Exchange-traded notes, specialist debt instruments, etc.

8. Avento will give a new impetus to this internationalization strategy on 4 fronts:
9. First it will enhance SEM's attractiveness as a listing and trading platform for Exchange Traded Funds (ETF's). In fact, henceforth providers of ETF's will be able to make a market in these instruments on a real-time basis, from wherever they are, through a remote connection to Avento and enhance the underlying liquidity in these financial products.
10. Second, Avento, will set the stage for international brokers to connect to SEM platform as remote members and attract more international order-flows to our market, creating thereby the space for enhanced liquidity.
11. Third, the SEM has been chosen among seven African Exchanges by the AfDB to be part of an African Exchanges Linkage Project, which will integrate these exchanges through technology with the aims of ensuring better financial integration in Africa and enhancing secondary market liquidity on African Exchanges. Avento will facilitate this integration process for the SEM and create space for more global order flows to converge to SEM's platform from the other African Exchanges.
12. Fourth, Avento opens the door for the SEM to enter the derivatives space and plan for future market development of new products, including futures and options on foreign underlyings.
13. Over and above the added impetus that Avento will give to SEM's internationalisation strategy this new ATS comes with a whole new set of functionalities and features that will without any doubt put the SEM at par with the best in class in terms of trading experience and trading technology. It comes with a full-fledge state-of-the-art surveillance system, called Clarity, which will ensure real-time market surveillance of market activities and promote enhanced market integrity.
14. Finally, Avento comes with a brand-new high-end and state-of-the-art on-line trading app, which will bring the stock market within the palm reach of the retail investor in Mauritius. This new on-line trading app constitutes a substantial improvement on the previous on-line

trading app, in terms of content, feel, look and breadth and depth of information it provides to the investor. It is a powerful device to democratize share ownership in Mauritius and democratize the economy.

15. The successful implementation of Avento and mySEM on-line app, ladies and gentlemen, would not have been possible without the commitment, relentless drive and absolute dedication of a number of people who, behind the scenes have been the real drivers of this project. I would like today to thank all these people.

16. First, from the STT team, I would like to thank Zack Hodgson, Chairman of STT, Hooben Pillay, Project Manager, Henri Prevot, STT's talented geek, Mushe Ndwambi and Reeco Roets.

17. From SEM/CDS team, I would like to thank Vipin Mahabirsingh, our driver and reliable Project Manager, Avish Goomany, Manoven Sadayen, Swavnil Rughooputh, Nishan Aubeeluck, Avinash Beeharry, Ritesh Umrit, Warren Dantier, Leena Dhunnoo, Pamela Li, Shalini Gokhool and Christophe Neveu. I invite you to give a big round of applause to all these movers and shakers.

18. I would like to thank the AfDB for supporting the project all through and for giving the SEM a very important grant to fund the implementation of this project.

I would like to thank the FSC for supporting the SEM through the timely approval to changes in our rules and procedures.

My thanks also go to SEM's Board of Directors for its support and guidance on the project.

19. I would fail in my duty if I do not thank MIT, our previous provider of technology, for 20 years of reliable and top end services.

20. Last but not least, thank you, Honourable Minister, for always responding present to SEM's solicitations, a clear indication of your support to the development of capital markets activities in Mauritius and the development of Mauritius as a leading IFC.

Thank you.