PRESS RELEASE

Official opening speech

By

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SOFITEL L'IMPERIAL RESORT&SPA

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Honorable LORMUS BUNDHOO - minister of health & quality of life, Republic of Mauritius,

Chairpersons of Mauritius medical and dental council,

Chairpersons, presidents of medical councils in Africa,

Distinguished participants,

The AMCOA family,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure as the president of AMCOA to welcome you all to this 18th AMCOA annual conference.

We really appreciate the hospitality of the people of Mauritius since the arrival of AMCOA members and family in this beautiful multi colored Tropical Paradise Island.

Since 1996 when AMCOA was still known as AMCOSA which subsequently changed to AMCOA in 2007, the number of members has grown and more countries have expressed interest to join. We need to continue promoting AMCOA with the aim of reaching as many countries as possible in Africa. This can only be done through an elaborate marketing&promotional strategy.

We are all aware of the challenges the African continent is facing as far as the health sector is concerned.These include the scarcity of health professionals, brain drain, the quality of medical education, malpractice, the increase number of litigations, and many others.

Ladies and gentlemen:

No single state can address these challenges on it's own.

Thus the need to ensure a common and coordinated medium through which medical regulatory authorities can share information and exchange best practices on these and other related matters as well as devise mechanisms to uniformly address these pertinent issues of common concern, even to the point of influencing policy decisions taken at the political level for the benefit of everybody in the African continent.

The vision of AMCOA is to support medical regulatory authorities in Africa in the protection of the public interest

by promoting high standards of medical education, registration, licencing, regulation as well as facilitationof ongoing information exchange.

AMCOA AS ESTABLISHED HAS THE FOLLOWING OBJECTIVES:

To;

1) **Share views and exchange information on matters of common concern;**
2) **Offer a forum for member bodies to liaise with each other in regard to the standards for registration of medical practitioners and, where applicable, other health-care personnel;**
3) **Promote liaison among members bodies in regard to the standard of education and training of health professionals registered with the respective medical councils**
4) **Offer a forum for member bodies to share views on relevant legislation relating to the control of health-care professionals**
5) **Promote the adoption of shared and common views through communication with and recommendation to member bodies**
6) **Facilitate cooperation and collaboration among regulatory authorities, including establishing a network for the regular exchange of medical licensing and disciplinary information**

7) **Provide a forum for development and sharing of new concepts and new approaches in the regulation of medical practice**

8) **to encourage and support research, policy analysis and policy development related to medical licensure and regulation**

9) **Serve as an information source to medical regulatory authorities, the public and national organisations.**

For the last 2 days, the AMCOA sub commitees have worked tirelessly in developing their terms of reference, mandates and responsibilities as well as developing work plans and setting deliverables in line with the 2013-2018 AMCOA strategic plans.

The annual AMCOA conference is intended to provide a forum for member councils to share knowledge and exchange useful experiences.

The theme of last year conference, which was held in Kigali, Rwanda, was "management of medical litigations". The conference came up with a number of protocols which are currently being implemented by the partner states.

The theme of this year's conference is "Task shifting in medical practice". This is apt for a continent grappling with challenges in the health sector as highlighted in the earlier part of this speech. We are expected to discuss among others:

The Process of implementing task shifting, task shifting practice & it's regulatory implications, legal & ethical issues affecting the practice, licencing in relation to task

shifting, quality assurance of task shifting and harmonisation in task shifting. The health sector is one of the very demanding and sensitive areas. This is particularly given that it is the sector that deals with deal with human life and matters of life and death. Unfortunately the management of our patients does not always go they way it should for various technical and non technical reasons. Thus clear rules and guidelines have to be in place to ensure timely and efficacious delivery of services to the needy parties. The regulatory authorities bear the biggest responsibility in ensuring that such guidelines are in place. These Authorities must continue engaging with the Government, the individual practitioners and amongst themselves to ensure that this happens.

In Conclusion, Honourable Minister, allow me to once again thank: the Government & people of this beautiful country, the Republic of Mauritius, for the hospitality they have exhibited towards the AMCOA fraternity since our arrival. We look forwards to having a fruitful meeting & enjoyable stay as we deliberate, matters pertaining to the health & better quality of our people.

I wish you all fruitful discussions.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS YOU ALL.