



**Vijaya Laksmi**  
*Chairman of Board*

21 March 2021

**Subject: Recommendation letter for Mr Jawahar Lall Athal**

Dear Selection Committee,

This letter is in support of Mr Jawahar Lall Athal (Passport number: 1531366), who is applying for the *Research Scholarship*. I had a formal meeting with him about his application and I listened to his statement of purpose with great care, which I find both compelling and commendable.

Mr Athal is a rare combination: he is already at this young age a seasoned expert in both leadership and management. He has founded YUVA, one of the largest and most active NGOs of Africa, in 2015 with the intent to alleviate poverty in the Black Continent. Since then, he has been serving the organisation as Executive Director and reporting to a Board of 18 members, which I am Chairman of.

Mr Athal is highly appreciated and praised in the industry for the innovations that he has brought to the civil society. He made sure to initially study Community Services from TAFE (Australia) in order to professionalise social work and charity in Africa. Later, he went the extra mile to study Business and Enterprise from the Edinburgh Napier University (UK) in order to crack the solution regarding CSR and related financial problems, which most organisations across the Continent were facing. He got distinction degrees in both community services (Australia) and Business and Enterprise (UK), which undoubtedly shows how he likes to pursue excellence though both study fields are poles apart.

Apart from taking YUVA to another level in terms of prestige and reputation at an international level, I believe that the biggest achievement of Mr Athal at YUVA is his creation of the YUVA Academy, the first-ever professional social enterprise of Africa, which sells empowerment programmes to young people and then reinvests the money it makes back into the local community to support the education, health and



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employment of Mauritian families living in poverty. This social entrepreneurship venture allows YUVA to tackle both financial and social problems, thus improving people's life chances, supporting communities and helping the environment. So, when YUVA Academy profits, YUVA and the society profit.

In addition, under Mr Athal's leadership, YUVA has won several eminent awards, including the "CEO Global's Titans: Building Nations Award 2019", "SADC's Best Practice Award 2019", "NGO Leadership & Excellence Award 2019", "Healthcare Award 2018", "Social Innovation Award 2018", "Africa NGO Leadership Award 2018", "SADC's Best Practice Award 2018" and "Africa NGO Leadership Award 2017". Besides, he went on to make YUVA receive the Special Consultative Status by the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Today, as Executive Director of YUVA, Mr Athal leads 23 staff.

Add to all this that Mr Athal is a very congenial person, well-liked by staff members and fellow mates alike, and you will see why I am so positive about this bright and energetic young leader. I endorse his candidacy with confidence and enthusiasm.

Regards,

