

CABINET DECISIONS – 09 OCTOBER 2009

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of Dr the Hon Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, to France, the United States and the United Kingdom from 21 to 29 September 2009.

France

In Paris, the Prime Minister, who was invited by Mr. Koichiro Matsuura, Director General of UNESCO, attended the presentation of a set of gold, silver and bronze commemorative medals on the occasion of the 109th Birth Anniversary of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Father of the Nation. UNESCO issues such commemorative medals in the memory of eminent personalities who have left their imprint on the history of their countries and of mankind in general. In the past, UNESCO has issued such commemorative medals in memory of Mahatma Gandhi, His Holiness Pope Paul II, Jawaharlal Nehru, Marie Curie and Confucius.

United States

In the United States, the Prime Minister participated in the 64th Session of the UN General Assembly. The general debate focused on the theme “**Effective responses to global crisis: strengthening multilateralism and dialogue among civilizations for international peace, security and development**”.

In his Statement to the General Assembly, the Prime Minister spoke, amongst other things, of the impact of the unprecedented economic crisis on developing countries, highlighted the bold economic reforms undertaken by Mauritius since 2005 which has enabled it to ward off, to some extent, the adverse effects of the economic crisis, reaffirmed the sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and Tromelin and apprised of ongoing negotiations with the U.K. and France so that Mauritius could exercise its sovereignty over these islands.

The Prime Minister also attended –

- (a) a Working Luncheon with President Obama. The object of the Working Luncheon was to foster a dialogue and build on some of the themes President Obama had articulated during his recent visit to Ghana, particularly the importance of partnership and the creation of opportunity that would lead to increased economic and social development for the people of Africa. The Prime Minister, who addressed on the topic “Job creation, particularly for the youth and the entrepreneurs”, elaborated on measures taken by Government to create jobs for young people and to promote an entrepreneurial culture;
- (b) the 5th Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative which aimed at identifying immediate and pragmatic solutions to address the world’s most pressing problems;

- (c) a Meeting of the Presidium of Socialist International at the invitation of its Secretary General, Mr Luis Ayala. He intervened on the theme of Climate Change and its effects on Small Island Developing States; and
- (d) a meeting with Mr Dean R. Glenn Hubbard and Professor William Duggan, Authors of the book "Aid Trap", who pointed out that Mauritius had been the source of inspiration in writing the book. The Prime Minister invited Mr Hubbard and Professor Duggan to come over to Mauritius to deliver a lecture.

He had a bilateral meeting with the newly elected Prime Minister of Nepal, during which they exchanged views on a number of issues such as climate change, development of tourism, the economic crisis and the peace process in Nepal.

United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister met -

- (a) Professor Derek Yellon, Director of the Hatter Cardiovascular Institute, Professor Malcolm Grant, President and Provost, and Sir John Tooke, Vice-Provost of the University College London. The aim of the meeting was to explore possibilities for further collaboration given the very high incidence of cardiovascular disease and diabetes in Mauritius. With a view to creating better awareness in Mauritius and generate greater momentum in Government's action to tackle cardiovascular diseases and diabetes, the Prime Minister agreed to the holding of the next International Meeting of the Institute in Mauritius. The Prime Minister also explored the possibility of linking the General Medical Council of Mauritius with that of the UK; and
- (b) Dr Ian Jacobs, Consultant Gynaecologist, who has just been elected Dean of the University College London and Dr Anthony Silverstone, Consultant Gynaecologist. He requested Dr Jacobs and Dr Silverstone to explore avenues for the setting up of an Institute for Women's Health in Mauritius. They will be coming to Mauritius in November 2009 to pursue discussions.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the good performance of Mauritian sportsmen and artists at the "VI^{ème} Jeux de la Francophonie" held in Beirut, Lebanon from 27 September to 6 October 2009. Mauritius ranked 6th out of 42 nations, which participated in the Games, with a total of 7 medals in sports, i.e., 2 Gold, 3 Silver and 2 Bronze and a Gold Medal in the Dance Competition, performed by SR Dance Group.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands to Margarita Island, Venezuela from 22 to 27 September 2009, where he participated in the Second Africa-South America Summit, which focused on the roadmap to strengthen the deep-rooted historical and political ties of the two continents. The Summit adopted, inter alia, the Margarita Declaration, which paves the way for increased cooperation between the two continents in the fields of economy, trade, investment, tourism, education, agriculture, environment, peace and security, democracy, good governance and Human Rights.

Cabinet has further taken note that the Margarita Declaration contains a paragraph urging the United Kingdom and France to complete negotiations, as a matter of urgency, for a fair, peaceful and definitive solution regarding our claim of sovereignty, respectively, over the Chagos Archipelago, including Diego Garcia, and Tromelin and the surrounding maritime spaces in accordance with the Resolutions of the United Nations and the other pertinent regional and international organizations.

4. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements made by the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security with the Mauritius Sugar Producers' Association for the sugar milling companies to take necessary precautions to avoid the falling of sugar canes from loaded lorries on the road, to ensure that the canes loaded on lorries do not exceed the authorized height, and to remove from the road any cane fallen from the lorries. Moreover, a campaign is being carried out by the Traffic Branch to sensitize lorry drivers on the impending dangers if the lorries are not properly loaded and secured. Cabinet has agreed to the relevant legislation being amended to provide for stricter penalties for any offences committed.

5. Cabinet has agreed to a High Level Committee being set up to review the Road Traffic Act to make better provisions for road safety, registration of vehicles and to provide for stricter penalties for careless and inconsiderate driving.

6. Cabinet has taken note that, following a request from the Hon Ms Lesego E. Motsumi, Minister of Health of Botswana, collaboration in the field of cardiology and other areas of interest in the medical field, have been established between the Ministry of Health of Botswana and the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care. A medical team from the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care comprising a Cardiologist, one Nursing Officer and a Technician would visit Botswana to carry out diagnostic/echo procedures. Cardiac patients from Botswana would also be referred to Mauritius for surgery. The Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care would further arrange for hands-on training at the Centre for a Cardiologist, an Anaesthetist and Nursing Officers from Botswana.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction into the National Assembly of The Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority Bill which makes provision for the establishment of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority and the promotion and development of small and medium enterprises by the setting up of a more responsive institutional framework to cater for their needs. The new Authority, which would take over the activities of the Small Enterprises and Handicraft Development Authority (SEHDA), would, inter alia, provide business facilitation services, devise and review policies and promote and develop entrepreneurship.

8. Cabinet has taken note of developments on arrangements being made for our participation in the World Expo 2010 to be held in Shanghai, China from 1 May to 31 October 2010. An Inter-Ministerial Committee is working on the selection of exhibits to be displayed in our stand which would be located in the Africa Joint Pavilion. In the context of the Expo, Mauritius would hold its National Pavilion Day on 29 May 2010 when our national images and traditions would be presented. About 200 participants from various countries would display their products and it is expected that more than 70 million people would visit the Expo. The theme of the Expo is "**Better City, Better Life**" representing the wish of humankind for a better life in future modern urban environments.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development and Family Welfare launched the Inter-Generation Relationship Programme at St Pierre on 3 October 2009 with a view to -

- (a) building a strong relationship between children, parents and grandparents through communication and sharing;
- (b) enhancing a sense of family belonging and security;
- (c) promoting high value for family and traditions; and
- (d) supporting and encouraging members of the family to abstain from substance abuse and violence.

Cabinet has further taken note that this activity would also be held at Bell Village, Goodlands, Flacq, Phoenix and Mare d'Albert.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the National Women's Council and the British American Insurance Co (Mtius) Ltd. signed a Memorandum of Understanding on 1 October 2009, providing for collaboration in Capacity Building of the National Gender Machinery for Advocacy on Gender and Human Rights Issues.

11. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with its objective to exercise strict sanitary control on food outlets, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has, from September 2008 to date, issued 212 prohibition orders and 939 contraventions and effected various seizures of foodstuffs unfit for human consumption, viz., milk products, frozen vegetables, pulses, seafood, rice, meat, canned foodstuffs, flour and ready-cooked food. All seized foodstuffs have been disposed of at the Mare Chicose Sanitary Landfill.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Joint Annual Report 2009 on EC-Mauritius Cooperation, the key document required as part of the Mid-Term Review of the Country Strategy Paper implemented under the 10th EDF, would be submitted to the European Commission. The Joint Annual Report reviews our cooperation with the European Commission for the period 2008 to 2009 and focuses on the socio-economic performance of the country, the utilization of EDF commitments, governance profile and commitments elaborated in the context of the 10th EDF programming.

13. Cabinet has taken note of progress made in the implementation of MS ISO 9001:2008 in all hospitals and at the Head Office of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life. ISO Certification would further consolidate Government's effort in the delivery of quality health care to the public.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Statutory Bodies Family Protection Fund with the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands as Chairperson.
