

CABINET DECISIONS – 14 AUGUST 2009

1. Cabinet has taken note that the ground breaking ceremony of the Mauritius Tianli Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone Project would be held in the second fortnight of September 2009. The Project which involves investment to the tune of US\$ 750m, would create about 42,000 jobs.

2. Cabinet has taken note that a number of measures to attend to suspected cases of Influenza A(H1N1) have been initiated, inter alia, -

- (a) an Isolation Ward has been identified in each hospital for admission of positive cases; and
- (b) Flu-Clinics have been set up in four regional hospitals and in Area Health Centres to receive patients with influenza.

The Flu-Clinic at Flacq Hospital would be opened on 17 August 2009.

Cabinet has also taken note that a “National Wash your Hand” sensitization campaign has been launched on 12 August at Sir Veerasamy Ringadoo Government School and the next such event would be held at Daneswock Sewraz Government School, Triolet.

Cabinet has further taken note that, as at date, 29 confirmed cases of Influenza A(H1N1) have been recorded in the Island of Mauritius and one in the Island of Rodrigues, three deaths due to the disease have been registered and six of the cases, including a student of Sookdeo Bissoondoyal SSS, are still under treatment in Isolation Wards.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the second round of talks on the Chagos Archipelago held in July 2009 between the Senior Officials of the Government of Mauritius led by the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service and those of the British Government led by Mr Colin Roberts, Director of Overseas Territories Directorate and Commissioner for the British Indian Ocean Territory, viz.-

- (a) both sides reiterated their respective positions on sovereignty as expressed at the first round of talks held in London on 14 January 2009;
- (b) a decision on the issue of resettlement would be taken in the light of the decision of the case before the European Court of Human Rights;

- (c) the British delegation agreed to examine the proposal of the Mauritian side to set up a mechanism to look into the joint issuing of fishing licences in the region of the Chagos Archipelago; and
- (d) Mauritius and the UK would work together towards a coordinated submission to the United Nations Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf for an Extended Continental Shelf around the Chagos Archipelago.

4. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement signed with the US, negotiations were launched on 5 August 2009 in Nairobi, in the presence of Mrs Hillary Clinton, US Secretary of State and Ambassador Kirk, US Trade Representative. In her statement, Mrs Clinton commended Mauritius for its success both on the political and economic fronts. She further praised Mauritius for the reform programme and exhorted other African countries to follow our example. The objective of the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement is to foster trade and investment ties with the US through the reduction and gradual elimination of impediments between the two countries.

5. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken by the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security to address the problem of fruit losses caused by bats, including a national campaign for the promotion of the netting method.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the main conclusions and recommendations of the Actuarial Reports on the review of the National Pensions Fund and the National Savings Fund for the period July 2000 to June 2005 carried out by the United Kingdom Government Actuary's Department. The Reports indicate that -

- (a) the National Pensions Fund and National Savings Fund are financially sound with positive predictions and that the Funds can healthily sustain the coming 40 years; and
- (b) the implementation of the gradual increase of retirement age from 60 to 65 years would strengthen the balance of funds for the National Pensions Fund and National Savings Fund for the future.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the signature of an agreement between the Government of USA and the Government of Mauritius for a grant of 300,000 USD for the upgrading of facilities for the protection of vulnerable, high risk nuclear and radiological materials as follows -

- (a) upgrading of the physical protection of the two Cobalt Teletherapy Units at the Radiotherapy Department of Victoria Hospital, Candos;
- (b) upgrading of the physical protection of the Fruit Fly Cs-137 Irradiator and the Co-60 Irradiator of the Ministry of Agro Industry, Food Production and Security;
- (c) the construction of a small central radioactive waste storage facility for the conditioning and storage of all disused radioactive sources in the country; and
- (d) provision of equipment for the inspection and searching of radioactive sources by the Radiation Protection Authority.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions would sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of the Arab Republic of Egypt, which provides for cooperation in the fields of –

- (a) social defence, i.e., preventive measures against delinquency and addiction;
- (b) occupational rehabilitation for people with special needs; and
- (c) care of the elderly.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the implementation of the Special Collaborative Programme for Support to Women and Children in Distress, which aims at providing support to women and children in distress by enhancing their livelihood and integrating them in the mainstream of development. An amount of Rs 120m for the period July 2009 to December 2011 has been earmarked for the project. Under the Programme, consideration would be given to the funding of projects geared towards addressing social problems.

10. Pending the completion of the review of the Comprehensive Grant Formula by an Education Policy Committee and a Technical Working Group, Cabinet has agreed to payment of grant to private-aided secondary schools for the period July-December 2009 on the basis of the existing arrangement under the Formula.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Qualifications Authority would promulgate new regulations aiming at -

- (a) reducing the time frame for registration or renewal of applications from 3 to 2 months in accordance with the Business Facilitation Act;
- (b) providing for appeal, within a prescribed delay, for rejection, cancellation or non-renewal of application for registration; and
- (c) increasing fees and levying of charges for the registration, accreditation and recognition of qualifications.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade would promulgate regulations under the International Organisations and Conferences (Privileges and Immunities) Act to extend privileges and immunities to the Permanent Court of Arbitration, its officials, Adjudicators, as well as participants in the Court's proceedings, in line with a Host Country Agreement signed by Mauritius with the Permanent Court of Arbitration.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade on 30 and 31 July 2009 to Johannesburg, South Africa where he attended -

- (a) the Special Meeting of the SADC Committee of Ministers of Trade which adopted the draft SADC Protocol on Trade in Services;
- (b) the SADC Ministerial Meeting on Regional Economic Integration, which discussed, inter alia, the impact of global economic crisis on the SADC region and preparations for the launching of SADC Customs Union;

- (c) the SADC Ministerial Meeting on Finance and Investment which delved on -
 - (i) the Project Preparation and Development Facility to package bankable projects for investment in the SADC region;
 - (ii) the Resource Mobilisation Strategy for implementation of regional programmes so as to minimise the risk of heavily relying on support from international cooperating partners; and
 - (iii) Anti-Money Laundering.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Kenya on 5 and 6 August 2009 where he, inter alia, participated in the 8th AGOA Forum. Issues discussed at the Meeting included –

- (a) the possible effects of global challenges on AGOA;
- (b) the role of Intellectual Property Rights in attracting investment, improving competitiveness and promoting the growth of the private sector;
- (c) climate change; and
- (d) export diversification and competitiveness and small and medium size enterprises.
