

CABINET DECISIONS – 20 NOVEMBER 2009

1. Cabinet has taken note that Dr the Honourable Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, Prime Minister, would attend the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) 2009 to be held in Trinidad and Tobago. He would be accompanied by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade. The special theme of CHOGM 2009 is "**Partnering for a more Equitable and Sustainable Future.**" During his mission, the Prime Minister would meet, amongst others, the Rt. Hon Gordon Brown, Prime Minister of the UK, Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, Mrs Sheikh Hasina Wajed, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, the Hon Kevin Rudd, Prime Minister of Australia and Mr Jacob Zuma, President of South Africa.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction into the National Assembly of the Landlord and Tenant (Amendment) Bill, which provides for a yearly increase in rental of business premises of 10% of the difference between the market rent and the rent being paid and for business lettings to be liberalized after 31 December 2017.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the "International Conference on Diabetes and Associated Diseases", held in Mauritius from 12 to 14 November 2009, on the theme "**Preventing Diabetes and its Complications: A Challenge for the 21st Century**". The Conference is the first of its kind organized in the Africa region.

Dr the Honourable Navinchandra Ramgoolam, GCSK, FRCP, Prime Minister, who opened the Conference highlighted the ills done by diabetes and underlined that the complications arising from diabetes, such as cardiovascular problems, renal failures, eye problems and lower limb amputations are not only very costly but also have great adverse impact on families and society. He also announced that, as from 13 November 2009, a glucometer and sticks would be provided, free of charge, to all children with type 1 diabetes.

The Conference adopted the "Mauritius Call for Action on Diabetes and Associated Diseases", which lays out key strategies and commitments urgently required for planning and implementing national diabetes and NCDs prevention and control programmes so as to reduce their burden in the Africa region. The main recommendations contained in the declaration are as follows -

- (a) Sensitization and advocacy in the fight against diabetes and other Non-Communicable Diseases should be increased, and National Surveillance Systems strengthened.
- (b) Integrated prevention and control policies and plans for diabetes and other Non-Communicable Diseases should be developed.

- (c) The culture of healthy lifestyle should be promoted.
- (d) Diabetes and other NCDs should be included in the Millennium Development Goals.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Local Government, Rodrigues and Outer Islands is reviewing the standards set for discotheques with a view to further increasing safety and security, particularly fire hazards. Moreover, the Tourism Authority is constantly monitoring the conditions of all discotheques, including attendance by minors.

5. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the Maurice Ile Durable Project, it is proposed to develop geothermal power, which is cost-effective, reliable and environment friendly. A pre-feasibility study carried out by a Geomorphology Expert has revealed the potential for geothermal energy in Mauritius and possible sites have also been identified. In the circumstances, a Committee, under the aegis of the Ministry of Renewable Energy and Public Utilities, has been set up to examine all issues related to the exploitation of geothermal energy and to make recommendations to Government.

6. Cabinet has taken note that, under the framework of the Collaborative Curriculum Development on Waste Management in Africa and Pacific regions, the University of Mauritius, in collaboration with European and African Universities, would host the First International Conference on "Solid Waste Management in Developing Countries" in September 2011. The Conference would serve as a forum for the identification of best pragmatic practices and sensitize stakeholders on the question of solid waste management. High level experts, academics, researchers, and professionals from USA, the Aristotle University of Greece, the Bremen University of Applied Science of Germany and the Griffith University of Australia would serve as Resource Persons. About 100 participants are expected to attend the Conference.

7. Cabinet has taken note that, in view of the great interest shown by international investors to set up private health care services and provide medical education in Mauritius, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has prepared a Clinical Training Framework Agreement and a Supplemental Agreement highlighting the responsibilities of the institutions, the Academic Physicians and the Students, as well as issues relating to insurance cover, confidentiality of information gained by students during their clinical training and infrastructure to be put in place.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life from 9 to 11 November 2009 to Reunion Island where he attended the *VIIIème Colloque VIH Ocean Indien*, which had as theme “**Banaliser le Test et Traiter Précocement**”. The objective of the Colloque was to provide a platform for medical and paramedical personnel, the civil society, NGOs, the private sector and the people living with HIV and AIDS, to share information, experience, knowledge and skills, as well as to promote best practices for the management and prevention of HIV and AIDS in the region.

In the margins of the Colloque, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life met the Director General of the *Centre Hospitalier Régional de la Réunion*, with whom he discussed matters pertaining to –

- (a) the training of doctors in a few specialised fields, and of officers in the maintenance of hospital equipment;
- (b) the use of the Pet Scan facilities at the Centre for Mauritian patients; and
- (c) the exchange of medical and paramedical students.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention promotes, protects and ensures the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities and promotes respect for their inherent dignity.

10. Cabinet has taken note that, following the visit of the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions to the Leonard Cheshire Disability of the UK, a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between that organization and the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions, together with Leonard Cheshire Disability (Mauritius), providing, inter alia, for -

- (a) assistance for the implementation of the National Policy Paper and Plan of Action on Disability;
- (b) an exchange of experts and technical personnel for the welfare of persons with disabilities;

- (c) the services of an Architect to advise on the designs of a Respite Care Centre in Mauritius and/or a volunteer to assist in the setting up and management of the Centre;
- (d) technical support in the implementation of the Mauritius Disability Management System; and
- (e) the strengthening of capacity-building of the personnel of the Disability Unit and NGOs in the Disability Sector.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications to the United Kingdom from 8 to 12 November 2009, where he attended the World Travel Market. On the occasion, two international awards were conferred on Mauritius for its performance in the Tourism Sector in 2009, viz, –

- (a) the '**Best Island Destination in the World**' by the prestigious World Travel Awards; and
- (b) the '**Number One Long Haul Destination for Weddings, Honeymoon and Couples**' by the leading trade magazine 'Selling Long Haul'.

In the margins of the mission, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism, Leisure and External Communications had –

- (a) working sessions with the main tour operators, selling Mauritian holiday packages, to motivate them to further promote the destination; and
- (b) a meeting with senior officials of Virgin Atlantic and British Airways which operate on the route Mauritius-United Kingdom.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the official visit of Mrs Jiang Li, Vice-Minister of the Ministry of Civil Affairs, People's Republic of China to Mauritius from 11 to 14 November 2009. During her visit, Mrs Jiang Li had a working session with the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions, signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Elderly Welfare and Ageing Services and visited the Foyer Trochetia Centre for elderly persons with disabilities and the Pointe aux Sables Recreation Centre for Senior Citizens. The Vice-Minister has agreed to consider providing –

- (a) equipment for the new Recreation Centre for Senior Citizens at Belle Mare;

- (b) keep-fit equipment for elderly persons;
- (c) assistive devices, such as wheelchairs and walking frames; and
- (d) adapted vehicles for transportation of Senior Citizens.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Arab Republic of Egypt, on 8 and 9 November 2009. With a view to further strengthening the China-Africa Cooperation, the Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao, announced, inter alia, –

- (a) the establishment of a China-Africa partnership to address climate change and develop the utilization of new energy resources;
- (b) cooperation in Science and Technology and the grant of post-doctoral fellowship to 100 Africans;
- (c) the enhancement of Africa's Financial Capacity by providing concessional loans for the development of small and medium size enterprises;
- (d) the phasing in zero tariff treatment to 95% of products from Least Developed Countries; and
- (e) the increase in cooperation in medical care and health, human resource development and education and people to people exchanges.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the constitution of the Board of the Regional Development Company Ltd. with Mr Ali Mansoor, Financial Secretary, as Chairperson. The Company would act as a facilitator, within the framework of Government's policy on Cross Border Initiative and in line with the Food Security Programme, to acquire agricultural lands for creating development zones in the region and to mobilise resources for the development of land and sites acquired in Mozambique.
