

CABINET DECISIONS – 16 AUGUST 2013

1. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius forcefully condemns the unacceptable massacre of innocent civilians that is taking place in Egypt following the *coup d'état* which has resulted in the ousting of the democratically elected President. In light of this, Government has decided to recall, with immediate effect, its Ambassador to Egypt and to temporarily close the Mauritius Embassy in Cairo. However, a skeleton diplomatic staff will be retained in Cairo to assist any Mauritian, including students or other nationals who may require assistance as appropriate.

2. Cabinet has taken note that, following the decision of Government to award scholarships to 50 deserving students from Africa, 63 applications have been received from 14 countries. After examination, 18 applications from Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, the Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania and Uganda, have been approved and the candidates have joined a tertiary education institution.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the review of the catchment areas of 35 high demand primary schools around the country in view of developments in the regions, setting up of new housing estates, and demographic changes. The reviewed catchment areas would be used for admission to Standard I as from 2014. With a view to tightening control and avoiding fraudulent practices for admission to Standard I as from 2014, a "Proof of Residency" Form, comprising the following three components, would be introduced -

- (a) certification of the genuineness of the address of the child by the Responsible Party;
- (b) verification of the address of the child, in situ, by the Police; and
- (c) certification of the application documents by the Ministry of Education and Human Resources.

The Ministry of Education and Human Resources has made arrangements to sensitize parents and stakeholders of the revised catchment areas.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions and the Remploy UK would sign a Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration to enhance the quality of life of persons with disabilities. The areas of cooperation relate, *inter alia*, to the setting up of a mechanism to assess the skills of persons with disabilities with a view to developing a disability policy and facilitating their integration in the workplace, and reviewing and upgrading the training strategies of the Training and Employment of Disabled Persons Board. The Remploy UK, a public organization, is the leading provider of employment services and support to persons with disabilities in search of a job.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Project Plan Committee has recommended eight projects to the tune of Rs426.32m for inclusion in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects are, amongst others, -

- (a) construction of a new Community Health Centre at Baie du Tombeau;
- (b) construction of a new market at Goodlands;
- (c) reconstruction of a bridge at La Mivoie, Rivière Noire;
- (d) sewerage project at Verger Bissambar, Beau Bassin; and
- (e) coastal protection, landscaping and infrastructure works at Bain Boeuf public beach.

6. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made to put up a market at Bel Air.

7. Cabinet has taken note that 77,374 tourists visited Mauritius in the month of July 2013 as compared to 76,166 in July 2012, i.e., an increase of 1.6%. Arrivals for the period January to July 2013 were 549,038 as compared to 543,319 for the corresponding period in 2012, i.e., an increase of 1.1%.

8. Cabinet has taken note that Enterprise Mauritius would organize the second edition of the Mauritius International Trade Expo (MAITEX 2013) from 22 to 24 August 2013. 115 local companies would exhibit 'Made in Mauritius' products from various sectors, namely textiles and fashion, agro and agri industries, light engineering and allied products, footwear, construction material, paint and chemicals, furniture, printing and publishing, fertilizers and luxury goods. Around 300 foreign buyers from 20 countries would attend MAITEX 2013. The Exporters Award Ceremony and the Mauritius Rum Festival would also be held in the margins of the Expo.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the recommendations in the Technology Needs Assessment Reports for an Enhanced Climate Change Adaptation and Reduction of Greenhouse Gases Emissions in Mauritius, prepared under the Poznan Strategic Programme on Technology Transfer for climate change adaptation and mitigation. Mauritius was selected as part of a group of 36 countries to conduct the needs assessment. The recommendations include -

- (a) micro-irrigation in order to optimise use of water while enhancing food production;
- (b) decentralized pest and disease diagnosis to enable farmers to make informed timely decision concerning pest and disease control as well as reduce unnecessary pesticide application and minimize risk of crop failure;

- (c) rainwater harvesting at residential level to harness an optimal amount of rain water and to promote its sustainable use;
- (d) restoration of coastal vegetation and dune to enhance the ecosystem services and its functioning;
- (e) rock revetment for an enhanced protection against surges and huge waves; and
- (f) promotion of the use of renewable energy, reduce fuel importation and promote greenhouse emissions reduction.

10. Cabinet has taken note of development in the setting up of an IIT Delhi Research Academy, which would ultimately lead to the setting up of an International Institute of Technology in Mauritius with the collaboration of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) of Delhi. The IIT Mauritius Project would be implemented in two phases covering a period of 10 years. During the first stage, an IIT Delhi Research Academy would be set up to establish a core facility and research capacity, and strengthen teaching of undergraduate programmes in the Faculty of Engineering.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Open University of Mauritius and the Open University of Tanzania. The Memorandum of Understanding provides, *inter alia*, for the exchange of students at postgraduate level who wish to undertake their research or field work or short term non-degree programmes, and collaboration in organising continuing education programmes, workshops, seminars in identified priority areas, and joint research programmes.

12. Cabinet has taken note that Universiade 2013, i.e., the Inter-Tertiary Educational Institutions Sports Competition, would be held from 26 September to 11 October 2013. It is expected that, over 2,000 students, including international students following courses in tertiary education institutions, would participate in the Games. The main disciplines retained are athletics, football, volleyball, basketball, handball, cross country, table tennis, badminton, rugby, tug of war and cricket. The event aims at promoting sports as an essential element for the development of physical and intellectual qualities, for team building and for personality development.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the 12th Heads of Prosecuting Agencies Conference would be held in Mauritius in May 2015. The main objective of the Conference is to discuss legal matters of contemporary significance for prosecuting agencies. The Heads of Prosecuting Agencies is an informal grouping of prosecuting agencies of selected Commonwealth and related jurisdictions. The Conference is held biennially. Some 40 Directors of Public Prosecution and Attorneys General are expected to attend the Meeting.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the Ninth Annual General Meeting of the Association of Regulators of Information and Communications for Eastern and Southern Africa would be held in Mauritius from 27 to 30 August 2013. The Annual General Meeting brings together regulators and associated actors in the ICT services sector of the Eastern and Southern African region to follow up on the implementation of decisions taken, agree on new activities and programmes, and make strategic decisions on ICT matters for the region. The main items on the agenda for the Annual General Meeting are, amongst others, cybersecurity, information society measurement, post code, postal security standards, postal quality of services, digital broadcasting migration.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the International ICT/BPO Investment Forum held in June 2013. Some 150 foreign and local participants attended the Forum. The remarkable performance of the Mauritian ICT-BPO industry against a backdrop of global economic turbulence had been acknowledged and four companies have expressed their interest in setting up an office in Mauritius, whilst representatives from some companies are exploring business opportunities with local companies and/or the possibility of investing in Mauritius.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Fisheries to the People's Republic of China. The Minister had a meeting with the Hon Chen Xiaohua, Vice-Minister of Agriculture, on development perspectives in fresh water, as well as marine aquaculture, diversification into new species, need for technical assistance, sustainable management of fishery resources, facilities for fishing vessels, development of joint ventures and capacity building. During the visit, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine of the People's Republic of China to ensure the safety of fish and fishery products intended for exports to the Chinese market by our fishery companies. The Minister also had discussions on investment prospects with the Chinese companies based in the Shandong province and visited a fish processing plant for Sashimi.

17. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would organise a High Level Capacity Building Workshop on Gender Mainstreaming from 19 to 21 August 2013. The objectives of the Workshop are, amongst others, to update Senior Officers and Gender Focal Points on latest developments in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment and enhance advocacy and strategic partnership across Government bodies to upscale and promote gender equality.

18. Cabinet has taken note that the appointment of Mr Baboorunjitsing Goordyal, GOSK, CSK, as Chairperson of the National Pensions Board has been renewed for a further period of one year with effect from October 2013.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –
- (a) the Boiler and Machinery Inspectors Board with Mr Philippe Christian Fournier as Chairperson; and
 - (b) the Board of the National Council for the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons with the Deputy Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions as Chairperson.
