

CABINET DECISIONS – 29 MARCH 2013

1. Cabinet has taken note that, in view of the poor response to a first survey on water rights, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities would promulgate the Central Water Authority (Census of Water Rights) Regulations to compel holders of water rights to complete and submit the census form, together with the relevant supporting documents, to the Central Water Authority by 01 July 2013 at latest, and to make it a criminal offence for non-compliance with the Regulations. The Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities is carrying out a census of water rights with a view to drawing up an inventory and compiling information on the volume of water abstracted, the purpose of the water rights, and the location where the rights is exercised for a better management of water reserves.

2. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities to rehabilitate the existing slow sand filters at Pailles and construct a new rapid gravity water treatment plant of a capacity of 30,000 m³/day. The operation of the existing water treatment plant, consisting of two sets of six slow sand filters and constructed some 50 years ago, is affected by muddy water during heavy rainfall, thus disrupting the supply of water in the region of Port Louis.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Land Acquisition Act being amended to provide for the interim payment of a compensation equivalent to the sum assessed by the Director, Valuation and Real Estate Consultancy Services to former owner(s) of land compulsorily acquired for Government projects, pending the determination of the final compensation payable.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of a Joint Working Group between Mauritius and India to consider the feasibility of constructing an oil terminal in Mauritius, that would cater for both local and regional demand for petroleum products. In view of the increase in maritime traffic in the Indian Ocean and the demand for bunker fuel, it is proposed to establish a petroleum terminal and develop Mauritius into a petroleum hub. The Joint Working Group would, amongst others, examine and make recommendations on the various options that can be considered for the financing and implementation of the project.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Banking (Amendment) Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to amend the Banking Act to provide for a bank, with the approval of the Central Bank, to restructure its business. The Central Bank would consider, amongst others, the following before approving, or otherwise, any request for restructuring –

- (a) the attainment of the objects of the bank and the discharge of its functions under the Bank of Mauritius Act;
- (b) any systemic risk that the bank may pose;

- (c) any incidence that the bank may have on the stability of the financial system of Mauritius; and
- (d) measures taken to better protect the bank's depositors and the public.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Mauritius Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Temporary Provisions) Bill in the National Assembly. The objective of the Bill is to provide for the setting up of an Interim Management Committee to manage the activities of the Society, pending the completion of an organizational and financial review, by the Office of Public Sector Governance.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would, shortly, introduce the Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Bill in the National Assembly to replace the Wildlife and National Parks Act. Major developments have taken place in the fields of biodiversity conservation and management since the coming into force of the Wildlife and National Parks Act in 1994. The new Bill would, therefore, make better provision for the protection, conservation and management of the native terrestrial biodiversity of Mauritius, give effect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and other biodiversity-related Conventions to which Mauritius is a party, and provide for the establishment, control and management of national parks and special reserves. The Bill has been posted on the website of the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security for perusal and comments.

8. Cabinet has taken note that, with a view to instituting a quality assurance system aiming at maintaining a high standard and enhancing the quality of care being given by the medical profession, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life has made arrangements for the organisation of examinations for Pre-Registration House Officers and Dental Surgeons prior to their registration by the Medical Council and the Dental Council of Mauritius, respectively.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Phase I of the e-Judiciary project would be launched, on a pilot basis, on 1 April 2013 at the Commercial Division of the Supreme Court. The project would, subsequently, be extended to the civil division and the appellate jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, and all subordinate courts. The e-Judiciary project, primarily, aims at improving the investment climate in Mauritius, reducing the delay for the disposal of business and commercial disputes to 100 days, improving service delivery by providing for the lodging of cases electronically, facilitating access to information, tracking of cases and enabling online payment.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Sixth Session of the Conference of African Ministers in charge of Integration (COMAI VI) would be held in Mauritius on 18 and 19 April 2013. The objectives of the Conference are to review progress achieved in the implementation of the recommendations of COMAI V and further reinforce regional cooperation.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Human Rights Council would organize a Universal Periodic Review Seminar in Mauritius from 13 to 17 May 2013. The objective of the Seminar is to train participants from Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States in Human Rights and the preparation of the Universal Periodic Review Report. Mauritius has been selected to host the seminar in view of the leading role played in advocating for stronger support to Small Island Developing States and Least Developed Countries at the Human Rights Council.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Ethiopia where he participated in the TICAD V Ministerial Preparatory Meeting. The main objective of the Meeting was to discuss the draft outcome documents of TICAD V, comprising the Declaration and the Action Plan and issues, such as Inclusive and Resilient Society – Contribution of TICAD to the MDGs process; Peace and Stability in Africa; and Trade and Investment in Africa – Opportunities and Challenges. The theme chosen for TICAD V is **Hand in Hand with a more Dynamic Africa**.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade had a meeting with HE Sam Kutesa, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Uganda on bilateral issues and the Director General of the International Planned Parenthood Federation for the Eastern Africa Region on matters relating to Family Planning in Mauritius.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the COMESA-EAC-SADC Tripartite Ministerial Committee on Trade would be held in Mauritius in June 2013. The Committee would consider the progress report on tripartite negotiations on trade and provide guidance to the negotiating process.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the Riphah Academy for Research and Education of the Riphah International University, Pakistan, in collaboration with the Doha Academy of Tertiary Studies, Mauritius, would hold an International Conference on Medical Education in Mauritius from 2 to 6 October 2013. About 500 participants from more than 41 countries are expected to attend the Conference. The theme of the Conference is **Health Professions Education: Aspiring for Excellence**. The topics that would be covered during the Conference include Faculty Development, Social Accountability and Ethics and Professionalism.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the Board of Investment, would organize an International ICT/BPO Investment Forum in June 2013. The main objectives of the Forum are to showcase latest developments in the ICT industry and provide a platform for local operators to meet some of the world's leading outsourcing organizations. It is expected that around 30 to 35 potential investors would attend the Forum.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to the Seychelles where he participated in the Second Ministerial Meeting on the Accelerated Programme for Economic Integration. The Meeting reviewed progress in the implementation of the Road Map on the Accelerated Programme for Economic Integration by the five reform-oriented countries and discussed the way forward.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and Mr J. P. Adam, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Seychelles exchanged views on the situation in Madagascar; spoke of the IOC Summit to be held in Mauritius; and discussed bilateral cooperation.

17. Cabinet has taken note of developments in the operationalisation of the ICT Academy in Mauritius, the ICT Centre of Excellence in Rodrigues and the ICT Skills Development Programme.

The ICT Academy is running the Accenture Open Education Pilot Programme, an online course created with the collaboration of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA, aiming at giving school leavers and graduates the skills and knowledge required for entry as IT Professionals in ICT companies. Some 157 participants are following the course.

The ICT Training Centre in Port Mathurin, inaugurated by the Prime Minister on 4 November 2012, is providing the technical infrastructure for online learning and ICT Training Courses. Some 120 participants attended a presentation on the various training programmes, and have registered themselves for the Microsoft Work Development Programme, the Oracle Workforce Development Programme, the Accenture – MIT Programme and the Digital Literacy Programme.

Under the ICT Skills Development Programme, ICT-BPO companies are encouraged to train unemployed youths to follow an industry-led MQA approved course and offer them a placement after their training.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized to mark the World Day for Physical Activity 2013 and the World Health Day, commemorated on 6 and 7 April respectively, namely –

- (a) demonstrations of physical exercises, NCD screening sessions, as well as counselling on obesity, healthy diet and risk factors for NCDs;
- (b) launching of the Health Tracks at Bassin and Goodlands;
- (c) sensitisation programmes and talks in all health regions, schools, Community Centres, Social Welfare Centres and Women Centres on the importance of physical activity and reducing the risk of developing hypertension; and
- (d) sensitisation campaigns on healthy diets with emphasis on low salt diets.

The theme retained for this year is **High Blood Pressure**.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Information and Communication Technology to India where he participated in the Indiasoft Conference and Exhibition 2013. Indiasoft is an international business-to-business platform that enables small Indian enterprises and IT buyers from Latin America, Africa, and the Asian region to create market niches, and launches innovative IT products and services, amongst others, e-Security, Telecommunications, Bio-Informatics, e-Governance, Mobile Application Services, Cloud Computing and bio-data Management.

In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Information and Communication Technology had bilateral meetings with the Minister of IT of West Bengal, the Minister of Post and Information and Communication Technology of Côte d'Ivoire and the President of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection to Uganda where the Board of Investment had organised a Buyers Sellers Meeting. The objectives of the Meeting were to enable "Made in Mauritius" products to penetrate Eastern and Southern African markets, promote the visibility of Mauritian products, and reposition Mauritius as a reliable exporter of quality products in regional market; as well as encourage agreements, joint ventures and strategic alliances.

In the margins of the Buyers Sellers Meeting, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection had a bilateral trade talk with the Hon Amelia Kyambadde, Minister of Trade, Industry and Cooperatives and the Hon David Wandendeya Wakikona, Minister of State for Trade and Cooperatives.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Dinay Reetoo, Senior State Counsel, as Chairperson of the Cooperative Tribunal.
