

## **CABINET DECISIONS – 4 JULY 2014**

1. After taking into consideration requests from the private sector to operate in the Jinfei Economic Zone, Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a Joint Venture Company to develop and manage the Zone and sub-lease land to Mauritian companies. The main objectives of the company would be to –

- (a) update the Master Plan and ensure rapid development of the Zone;
- (b) develop an appropriate marketing strategy to attract investment from potential foreign and local companies; and
- (c) ease the processing of sub-lease contracts with a view to fast tracking and ensuring rapid implementation of projects.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that a High Powered Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Minister of Local Government and Outer Islands, has been set up to look into arrangements to be made so that the commemoration of the 150<sup>th</sup> Death Anniversary of Père Laval is performed in the best conditions. The Committee would comprise, amongst others, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Public Infrastructure, National Development Unit, Land Transport and Shipping, the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, the Minister of Youth and Sports, the Minister of Arts and Culture, the Minister of Tourism and Leisure and the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that the International Trade Centre would assist Mauritius in the development and formulation of a National Export Strategy. The main objectives of the Strategy would be to -

- (a) address trade opportunities and challenges as a result of trade preference erosion, emerging competitive threats and develop new growth poles;
- (b) increase policy coherence and convergence, while improving the legal and regulatory framework;
- (c) formulate a strategic vision and roadmap for key sectors with export development potential, while addressing transversal trade support functions, such as skills development, trade facilitation, quality management and national branding; and
- (d) establish more formal linkages between trade and poverty alleviation, as well as with other development dimensions, such as gender, youth and environment.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Education and Human Resources signing an '*Entente de Cooperation*' with five countries, namely Burkina Faso, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco, Romania and Vietnam, in the context of a Project undertaken by the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* on the role of the State in regulating the provision of quality education. The main objective of the Project is to further cooperation among the participating states through the sharing of sound policy directions, experiences and good practices, and the adoption of innovative approaches. The *Entente* provides for collaboration, amongst others, for -

- (a) the setting up of permanent structures for policy dialogue between public and private providers of education;
- (b) the expansion of quality pre-primary education;
- (c) the improvement of assessment frameworks to evaluate learning achievement;
- (d) the improved use of educational statistics for monitoring and evaluation; and
- (e) the reduction of school drop-out rate and student attrition.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology and the University of Aberdeen, Scotland signing a Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration in the fields of Engineering and Law. The Memorandum provides, amongst others, for –

- (a) the exchange of academics, researchers and students;
- (b) the development of joint research projects, technical services, training, consultancy and related activities; and
- (c) the mobilisation of funds for the implementation of such activities.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of development in the implementation of the project for the connection of the Island of Rodrigues to submarine fibre optic cable to meet the Bandwidth demand of 1,010 Mbps in 2016 and 143,999 Mbps in 2030. The current bandwidth capacity is only 155 Mbps and is served by satellite.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment would implement the e-Work Permit System, comprising an e-Work Permit Portal, as well as a back-end application. The System, a modern and user-friendly platform, would enable online submission of applications for work permit and scanned accompanying documents. Applicants would have the option to effect payment of appropriate fees either online through the e-Payment Gateway, or by cash/cheque at the Cash Office of the Ministry or through the point of sale System.

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8. Following the extension of the licensing and supervisory powers of the Bank of Mauritius to Cooperative Credit Unions having total assets exceeding Rs20 millions, Cabinet has agreed to the Bank of Mauritius and the Registrar of Cooperative Societies signing a Memorandum of Understanding setting out the framework of cooperation to ensure effective supervision of credit unions. The Memorandum of Understanding provides, amongst others, for –

- (a) collaboration to promote the stability and soundness of the financial system of Mauritius;
- (b) the elimination of duplication of effort, second guessing and inefficiency with respect to supervision of cooperative credit unions; and
- (c) the reduction of supervisory gaps, if any, and arbitrage in the Financial Sector, specifically with regard to the credit unions.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade notifying the WTO on Category A commitments of Mauritius under the Agreement on Trade Facilitation. The Agreement contains a series of measures that should be implemented by members of the WTO to facilitate trade, and Category A consists of those measures that would be implemented upon coming into force of the Agreement on 31 July 2015, after it has been ratified by three quarters of the WTO members.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the National Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to the UN Women (2009-2014) being submitted to the United Nations Economic Council for Africa, as well as the UN Women - United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The National Review highlights major achievements by Mauritius in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the challenges encountered and opportunities for future actions. The Review would be used by the UN Economic Council for Africa to prepare regional assessment reports and contribute to the global review and appraisal to be prepared by the UN Women in consultation with stakeholders.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the elections of -

- (a) Mr Dheerujlall Baramlall Seetulsingh, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, as member of the UN Commission of Human Rights Committee; and
- (b) Miss Navamanee Ratna Patten (also known as Pramila Patten) as member of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Institute of Education, in collaboration with the University of Pretoria, South Africa and the South African Institute for Distance Education, would host the Sixth Distance and Teacher Education in Africa Conference in July 2015. The Conference would -

- (a) provide a platform for African educationists and educators to debate the challenges for education in Africa by engaging in North South and South South dialogue;
- (b) promote expansion and quality of education in Africa; and
- (c) help realize the goal of quality education and take the lead in finding African solutions to its educational challenges.

The theme of the Conference would be **“The Future we want: Teacher Development for Transformation of Education in Diverse African contexts”**. Some 250 delegates from about 20 countries of Africa and Europe, as well as representatives of international Institutions, such as UNESCO, the Commonwealth of Learning, and African Deans of Education Forum, would attend the Conference.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the operations of the Medical Unit of the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions is being reorganized with a view to increasing efficiency and effectiveness and providing better services to the public. The Medical Unit administers numerous schemes, inter alia, medical assessment, domiciliary visits, medical support to institutions, such as recreational centres, charitable institutions, probation homes/hostels and the Rehabilitation Youth Centre. The Unit also implements the annual vaccination campaign for the elderly population, disabled and inmates of charitable institutions.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Sugarcane Industry Research Institute (MSIRI) proposes to sign agreements for the sale of sugarcane varieties and fuzz with various international organizations, namely SOMDIAA for its estates in Chad, the Republic of Congo, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, and Gabon, and the multinational company Syngenta for its affiliate Syngenta Protecao de Cultivatos Ltda in Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Mauritius Sugarcane Industry Research Institute, created in 1953, has a collection of over 2,300 sugarcane varieties, comprising commercial varieties, varieties that can be used as parents for breeding as well as wild species of cane. A number of the Mauritian varieties of cane has the potential of being exploited commercially for the production of sugar on increasing acreage in different countries. M-varieties are now being tested for use as potential commercial biomass varieties for the production of electricity and ethanol.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the new vision to transform Mauritius into a SMART economy, the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology would implement and host the Government Service Platform at the Government online Centre in September 2014. The Platform, an electronic and information service highway, would connect the information systems of Ministries and Departments for the safe and secure exchange, access, maintenance and processing of data and information for the efficient and effective provision of Government services. It would provide a controlled and secured internet-based technical and organisational infrastructure and environment with reduced human intervention in data handling.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development to Kenya where he participated in the first Meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. The theme of the Meeting was “**Sustainable Development Goals and the Post-2015 Development Agenda, including Sustainable Consumption and Production**”. The Assembly made an appeal to the international community to reaffirm its commitment, amongst others, to -

- (a) ensure the full integration of the environmental dimension, especially throughout the sustainable development agenda;
- (b) achieve an ambitious, universal, implementable and realizable Post-2015 Development Agenda; and
- (c) undertake urgent actions to address climate change to achieve sustainable development, in accordance with the objectives and provisions of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

In the margins of the Assembly, the Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development participated in the “Pathway to Sustainable Development SIDS Ministerial Consultation” where challenges, opportunities for sustainable development and partnerships with UNEP were discussed, and a Breakfast Meeting between Mr Achim Steiner, UNEP Executive Director and SIDS Ministers of Environment.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Professional Architects’ Council.

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