

CABINET DECISIONS – 09 OCTOBER 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the mission of the Rt Hon Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, Prime Minister, to New York where he attended the Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and the 70th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In his address to the Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Prime Minister indicated that many of the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development converge with priority areas in his Vision 2030 Economic Mission Statement that lays emphasis on poverty eradication and social inclusiveness, and is dedicated to offering a life of dignity to all by providing a decent standard of living, basic services, productive employment, quality education, rule of law and good governance.

In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, the Prime Minister called upon the international community to help resolve the situation that prevents Mauritius from effectively exercising its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago and the Island of Tromelin, which form an integral part of the territory of Mauritius. He strongly and unequivocally rejected the so-called consultation exercise by the British on the purported resettlement of Mauritians of Chagossian origin in the Chagos Archipelago under conditions amounting to a gross violation of their most basic rights. He also urged the United States of America, which is currently using Diego Garcia for defence purposes, to engage in discussions with Mauritius regarding the long term interest of Mauritius in respect of Chagos Archipelago. He further called on the international community to support Mauritius in its legitimate endeavours to assert its sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

The Prime Minister had bilateral meetings with the Secretary General of the United Nations, President Jacob Zuma of South Africa, the President of Togo, the Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, the Prime Minister of Malta, the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, and the President of the United Nations General Assembly. He shared with them the main objectives of the Vision 2030, particularly Government's aim to achieve a 5.5% growth rate by 2017 with focus on Ocean Economy as a major pillar in the endeavour to transform Mauritius into a High Income Country.

The Prime Minister also deposited the Instrument of our Accession to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, thereby joining the 97 other countries as parties to the Convention. The Convention is an international treaty that addresses the humanitarian consequences and indiscriminate harm caused to civilians by cluster munitions, through a categorical prohibition and a framework for action.

In the margins of the mission, the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service and HE Mr Adel A.M. Al-Jubier, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, signed a General Framework Agreement between Mauritius and Saudi Arabia.

2. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Ban Ki Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations has accepted to be the Guest of Honour at the International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA) Congress that is being organized by the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms in May 2016. Cabinet has also taken note that the Judges of the Supreme Court would be present at the Congress.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms making regulations under the Insurance Act for the establishment of an Insurance Industry Compensation Fund, as well as a Hit and Run Sub-Fund, to provide for the payment of any claims remaining unpaid by reason of insolvency of an insurer and compensation to persons suffering from personal injury sustained in and resulting from a hit and run road traffic accident. An annual levy would be imposed on all vehicles, except Government-owned vehicles, registered with the National Transport Authority. The regulations would come into operation on 1 January 2016.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the Youth Employment Programme being extended to the civil service and other Government bodies. The Programme provides for the placement and training of unemployed youth, aged between 16 and 30, in order to promote the development of necessary skills in the labour force. Under the Programme, some 1,000 unemployed youth would be placed in the civil service and other Government bodies as from November 2015 for a initial period of one year.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Native Terrestrial Biodiversity and National Parks Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to make better provision for -

- (a) the protection, conservation and management of native terrestrial biodiversity, giving effect to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) and any other biodiversity-related Convention to which Mauritius is or may become a party; and
- (b) the identification, control and management of reserved lands and private reserves.

6. Cabinet has decided that the Minister of Finance and Economic Development would chair the Ministerial Committee to monitor the implementation of the Highlands Project. The Committee would comprise, among others, the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands; the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities; the Minister of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport; and the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms and Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation.

Cabinet has also decided that the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms and Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation would chair a Steering Committee to monitor and ensure the timely implementation of the new administrative city, to be known as Heritage City, as part of the Highlands Project. The Heritage City will be put up on a plot of land of an extent of 336 Arpents at Minissy situated on the left of Bagatelle Dam. The Committee comprises Senior Chief Executives and Permanent Secretaries of Ministries.

7. Cabinet has taken note that a plot of State land of an extent of 1A00 at Flic-en-Flac would be reproclaimed as public beach in line with Government policy to ensure that beachfronts, public beaches and access to the sea remain the domain of the public.

8. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications, 84,456 tourists visited Mauritius in September 2015 as compared to 74,516 in September 2014, i.e., an increase of 13.3%. For the period January to September 2015, tourist arrivals reached 803,755 as compared to 725,623 during the same period, in 2014, i.e., an increase of 10.8%. Growth has been registered in arrivals from Germany (+13.2%), UK (+6.4%), France (+3.1%), Switzerland (+8.5%), China (+63.6%), India (+24.8%), South Africa (+8.4%) and Reunion Island (+1.4%).

9. Cabinet has agreed to the nomination of Mr Salim Moollan to stand as candidate for re-election at the United Nations Commission on International Law (UNCITRAL). Mr Moollan is currently the Chairperson of the UNCITRAL.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the school calendar for the Primary and Secondary Education Sectors for the Academic Year 2016, which is as follows –

	<u>Primary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>
1st Term	Monday 11 January to Friday 01 April	Monday 11 January to Friday 01 April
2nd Term	Monday 18 April to Friday 15 July	Monday 18 April to Friday 15 July
3rd Term	Tuesday 16 August to Friday 04 November	Monday 08 August to Friday 28 October

Admission of students to Standard I and Form I would be on Friday 08 January 2016.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the Report of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) on the Project for Capacity Development on Coastal Protection and Rehabilitation in the Republic of Mauritius. The object of the Project is to conserve the coast of Mauritius in appropriate manners through the identification of affected sites of coastal erosion, the formulation of a coastal conservation plan, the selection of the priority coasts which are necessary for preventive measures and the conduct of detailed study, demonstration projects and continuous monitoring. The main findings of the Report are –

- (a) 17% of the coast has been eroded; there has been sand accumulation in 23% of the coast; and 59% of the coastal strip is stable. Severe erosion has been noted at Albion, Mon Choisy Public Beach and Bel Ombre; and
- (b) the average percentage of living corals in the lagoon has been estimated to be 27%.

Remedial works, i.e., improvement of hard structures, enhancement of beach nourishment, promotion of coral transplantation and enhancement of ecosystem have been proposed in respect of 14 highly impacted sites.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Director of the Pay Research Bureau has advised that the 2016 PRB Report would be published in the first quarter of 2016 owing to factors beyond the control of the Bureau. However, the Report will be effective from 01 January 2016.

13. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius accepting the Declaration on the Expansion of Trade in Information Technology Products, also known as the Information Technology Agreement (ITA), of the World Trade Organisation. The Declaration provides for State Parties to eliminate customs and other duties and charges in respect of a range of IT products, including chemical preparation for photographic uses, copying machines, parts and accessories to word processing machines, sound recording, electrical circuits, medical instruments, and electrical measuring appliances. The ITA expansion will help boost exports of ICT products by lowering their prices, thus facilitating the diffusion and adoption of affordable ICT products and services.

14. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing the Joint Undertaking on Administrative Cooperation for the Implementation of the Cumulation Provisions contained in the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) signed between the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Regions and the European Union (EU). The conclusion of the agreement, a requirement under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), will, among others, -

- (a) facilitate compliance with the EPA Cumulation Provisions collectively by the ACP;
- (b) establish an enabling environment signed, in common, by all ACP countries and facilitate regional value chain; and
- (c) empower the various Customs Administrations of the ACP/EPA signatory parties and Overseas Countries and Territories to interact with one another.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms would, shortly, introduce the Good Governance and Integrity Reporting Bill in the National Assembly. The main objects of the Bill will be to –

- (a) encourage and foster a culture of integrity and good governance in the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) stimulate integrity reporting in the public and private sectors;
- (c) encourage positive reports of acts of good governance;
- (d) disclose and deter malpractices and recover unexplained wealth; and
- (e) protect and reward persons making genuine disclosures and reports of malpractices.

16. Cabinet has agreed to the Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC) Phase 1 Skills Training Course being held in Mauritius from 30 November to 4 December 2015. The SAIHC, a regional hydrographic commission of the International Hydrographic Organisation, contributes in assessing survey requirements by enhancing the maritime-safety information dissemination and improving the publication of International Nautical Charts in the South African Charting region. Participants from, among others, Angola, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Tanzania and South Africa, would attend the training course.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications to France. He led the Mauritian delegation comprising hoteliers, Destination Management companies, Rodrigues Tourism Office, *Association des Hôteliers et Restaurateurs de l'île Maurice (AHRIM)*, *Association des Hôtels de Charme*, the Association of Tourism Professionals and the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA). The Deputy Prime Minister had a series of consultations with trade partners, in particular, representatives of cruise liners, tour operators, media, travel agents' organisations and the MTPA Public Relations representatives in France and the UK, to enlist their commitment in promoting Mauritius. The Deputy Prime Minister also met the Minister of Tourism and Culture of Seychelles, and the Minister of Tourism and Transport of Madagascar with whom he discussed, among others, the Iles Vanilles project.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment to India. The main objectives of the mission were to take stock of poverty alleviation and rural development policies and programmes initiated by the Ministry of Rural Development of the Government of India, and establish contacts with the Indian institutions involved in poverty alleviation projects. The Minister paid a courtesy call on HE Mr Bijendra Singh, Minister of Rural Development of India, had working sessions with, among others, the African-Asian Rural Development Organisation, the National Bank of Agriculture and Rural Development, the Council for Social Services Development, the National Institute of Rural Development and Panchayiti Raj, the Tata Institute of Social Science and the National Institute of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms and Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation to Estonia and Dubai. In Estonia, the Minister signed a Memorandum of Understanding in the area of e-Governance, and had high level meetings on the issues of e-governance, e-democracy and Mauritius being listed as a non-cooperative jurisdiction. The Estonia authorities have agreed to remove Mauritius from their list.

In Dubai, the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms and Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation had meetings, *inter alia*, with the Governor of the Dubai International Financial Centre; the Chief Executive Officer of Nasdaq Dubai and officials of the Dubai Financial Services Authority on the Financial Services Sector. Memoranda of Understanding on cooperation in the fields of technology and knowledge transfer and capacity building were signed with Nasdaq Dubai and the Dubai Financial Services Authority.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment, in collaboration with the National Empowerment Foundation, to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty commemorated on 17 October. The theme selected this year by the United Nations is **“Building a sustainable future: Coming together to end poverty and discrimination”**. The programme of activities to mark the Day includes the inauguration of a Recreational Centre at L’Agrément, St Pierre; the launching of the second phase of the Substance Abuse project; the inauguration of a learning corner at Residence Barkly; award of certificates to beneficiaries of the basic Adult Literacy project, and the inauguration of a green space at Ripailles.

21. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security on the occasion of the World Food Day 2015 commemorated on 16 October. The theme for World Food Day 2015, proclaimed by the Food and Agriculture Organisation, is **“Social Protection and Agriculture: breaking the cycle of rural poverty”**. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would organize an exhibition cum sales of agricultural and agro-processing products at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden, and Bois des Amourettes Football Ground. Other activities that would be organized at the SSR Botanic Garden would include –

- (a) demonstration of grafting techniques, roof-gardening, container gardening systems and agro-processing techniques;
- (b) exhibition of sheltered farming structures, rain water harvesting systems, hydroponic, tube-o-ponic and bioponic structures;
- (c) live demonstration of local food dishes (cassava, breadfruit and other exotic fruits); and
- (d) culinary competition of local dishes.

22. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Iswarduth Seetohul, Magistrate of the District Court of Rose Hill, as President of the Commission for Conciliation and Mediation.

23. Cabinet has taken note that the Board of the National Transport Corporation has approved the appointment, on contract, of Mr Hooteshsing Ramburn as General Manager. Mr Ramburn has held various senior positions, including Productivity Consultant at the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council, Executive Director at the National Empowerment Foundation, and Labour Migration Project Coordinator at the International Organisation for Migration.

24. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –

- (a) the Board of Trustees of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund with Mr Martin Nicolas Michel as Chairperson;
- (b) the Council of the National Institute for Cooperative Entrepreneurship with Mr Sudesh Puran as Chairperson; and
- (c) the Morcellement Board with the Senior Chief Executive, Ministry of Housing and Lands as Chairperson.
