

CABINET DECISIONS – 30 JANUARY 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note of the measures taken to give a new impetus to the National Development Unit (NDU), now operating under the Prime Minister's Office. The Unit, created in 1988 on an initiative of the Rt. Hon Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, Prime Minister, contributes to the enhancement of the quality of life through the provision of community-based infrastructure and amenities, implementation of land drainage programmes, and dissemination of information and advice to empower citizens. Through time, the role of the NDU has eroded and its objectives have been limited strictly to providing information to callers, registering complaints and implementing Government decisions related to social policies. The Prime Minister has met the Parliamentary Private Secretaries, and explained his vision and how the Unit should be reengineered so that it can better serve the population. It is proposed, in the short term, to –

- (a) urgently put in place a Land Drainage Authority to, amongst others, plan, design, supervise the construction of drains, and prepare and implement emergency projects and programmes for the disposal of surface water;
- (b) adopt the Framework Agreement for the Construction and Upgrading of Roads and Associated Civil Works devised by the Procurement Policy Office;
- (c) conceive a procedure Manual to better prepare and monitor projects, particularly in respect to variation works, extension of time, and liquidated damages;
- (d) set up a Fast Track Steering Committee for the early implementation of projects; and
- (e) install an updated Project Management System, a project monitoring software that would enable the NDU to better monitor its projects.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Contract of Affreightment regarding the transportation of petroleum products for Mauritius signed between the State Trading Corporation and Betamax Ltd, is being terminated forthwith in the light of, *inter alia*, the unlawful procedure and processes regarding the allocation of the contract.

3. Cabinet has taken note that, following consultations with all stakeholders on the embankment failure identified on the Terre Rouge-Verdun Link Road (M3), preliminary works would urgently be undertaken to stabilize the embankment of the road, necessary soil tests would be carried out, and a new design for the failed part of the road produced.

Cabinet has also taken note that appropriate arrangements would be made to avoid traffic congestion along the Port Louis-Sottise Dual Carriageway (M2) during peak hours.

4. In line with Government's vision of good governance and with a view to transforming Mauritius into a Knowledge Hub, Cabinet has agreed to the restructuring of the Tertiary Education Commission into a robust regulatory body that would adopt best and promising practices and international quality standards. The Commission would also be responsive to the needs of the Tertiary Education Sector. In the short and medium terms, it is proposed to -

- (a) undertake an internal audit and an external audit, as well as an in-depth review of the functions, staffing and structure of the Commission;
- (b) harmonize the duties and operations of the Commission with those of other recognised regulatory bodies;
- (c) reconstitute the Board of the Commission to give a new impetus to the Tertiary Education Sector;
- (d) recruit a new Executive Director; and
- (e) review the Tertiary Education Commission Act, and prepare a Higher Education Bill to complement the existing Education Act.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the surveillance programme to monitor the quality of water of La Nicolière reservoir and system. The measures that are being implemented include -

- (a) the close monitoring of the phosphorus level in raw water quality;
- (b) the conduct of a survey along the catchment areas of Midlands dam, La Nicolière Feeder Canal, and the rivers feeding the reservoir to identify potential polluting activities; and
- (c) urgent upgrading of La Nicolière Treatment Plant.

The public is advised to boil water before consumption.

6. Cabinet has taken note that a Ministerial Committee under the chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications, has been set up to oversee amendments to be brought to the Local Government Act with a view to improving local democracy.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Regional Reef Network Workshop would be held in Mauritius in February 2015. Discussions would focus on -

- (a) the Biodiversity Project designed to enhance current policies and strategies to develop new tools that would promote better biodiversity conservation and sustainable use of coastal, marine and island specific biological resources;
- (b) training on data collection on coral reef ecosystem; and
- (c) the impact of climate change on the coastal environment and associated ecosystems in Small Island Developing States.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the holding of the Second Meeting of Contracting Parties of the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA) in Mauritius in March 2015. The objectives of the Agreement are, amongst others, to –

- (a) ensure the long term conservation and sustainable use of the fishery resources of the high seas in the Southern Indian Ocean through cooperation among the Contracting Parties; and
- (b) promote the sustainable development of fishery resources in the area of application of the Agreement, taking into account the needs of Developing States bordering the area, and, in particular, the least developed and the Small Island Developing States.

The main objective of the Meeting would be to discuss issues relating to, *inter alia*, the rules of procedures, scientific committee meetings, deep-sea fisheries management, the state-of-the-art techniques in the conservation and sustainable use of deep-sea fisheries, and lessons learnt from Contracting Parties' experience in fisheries resource management.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized in the context of World Cancer Day 2015, commemorated on 4 February. The theme chosen to mark the Day is '**Not beyond us**'. The programme of activities would include -

- (a) a one-day workshop to evaluate progress achieved in the implementation of the Cancer Action Plan 2009-2014;
- (b) sensitization campaigns on measures to reduce stigma and increase compliance to treatment; and
- (c) free screening programmes on cancer by the NGO Breast Cancer Care Association for public officers, as well as the staff of the Airports of Mauritius Ltd.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to Abu Dhabi where he participated in the Fifth Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The Agency is an inter-governmental organization founded in 2009 to promote the adoption and sustainable use of all forms of renewable energy in the pursuit of sustainable development, energy access, energy security and low-carbon economic growth. During the Assembly, IRENA launched a report on Renewable Power Generation Costs and a search engine 'Resource' providing free access to the best available data and information on renewable energy. Discussions were held, amongst others, on waste-to-energy opportunities for island States.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of -

- (a) the Board of Trustees of the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care with Mr Vishwamitra Ramjee as Chairperson; and
- (b) the Public Officers' Welfare Council with Mr Alex André Duval as Chairperson.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of Trustees of La Clinique Mauricienne for 2015.
