

CABINET DECISIONS – 20 MARCH 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Arbitral Tribunal constituted under Annex VII to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) has issued its Award in the matter of the Chagos Marine Protected Area Arbitration. The Tribunal has, *inter alia*, declared that, in establishing the Marine Protected Area surrounding the Chagos Archipelago, the United Kingdom has breached its obligations under various articles of UNCLOS. Further, two members of the Tribunal have, in a Dissenting Opinion, stated that, *inter alia*, the United Kingdom is not the “Coastal State” in regard to the Chagos Archipelago and that the excision of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965 shows a complete disregard for the territorial integrity of Mauritius by the United Kingdom. The Tribunal has further decided to dismiss the UK’s application for costs since Mauritius has succeeded in significant part on its Submissions.

2. Cabinet has agreed to a request of Air Austral to operate scheduled flights, as from 08 May 2015, on the Reunion Island (Pierrefonds)/Rodrigues/Reunion Island (Pierrefonds) route on a twice weekly basis in line with the Bilateral Air Services Agreement signed between Mauritius and France. The direct air connectivity between Reunion Island and Rodrigues would lead to a growth in tourist arrivals and boost the Tourism Sector in Rodrigues.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of priority projects in the Water Sector to address water supply problems in regions that are most affected. The projects that would be implemented include –

- (a) replacement of some 200km of the most affected pipelines;
- (b) construction of five new service reservoirs, namely, at Cluny, Riche en Eau, Balisson, Rivière Dragon, and Alma, to ensure water distribution at the required pressure;
- (c) upgrading of the treatment plants at La Nicolière, Piton du Milieu, Rivière du Poste and Mont Blanc, and construction of new treatment plants at Bagatelle dam, Rivière des Anguilles dam and Pont Lardier (Deep River Beau Champ); and
- (d) construction of a dam at Rivière des Anguilles and Constance to improve the water supply in the South and the East of the country respectively.

The total cost of the projects is estimated at about Rs10.3 billion.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the establishment of a Trade Obstacles Alert Mechanism within the framework of the public-private dialogue on non-tariff measures. The Mechanism aims at facilitating the resolution of trade obstacles by favouring the exchange of information between commercial operators and public institutions, identifying and eliminating trade barriers, enhancing transparency, and improving public and private sector interaction and business environment in Mauritius. Through the platform, which would be operated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, commercial operators would be able to report trade obstacles faced in Mauritius or on foreign markets during the exportation or importation of goods, and the responsible Government agencies would respond to the alerts and take appropriate remedial measures.

5. Cabinet has taken note that, in line with the e-Government Strategy, the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would make the Consumer Protection (Export Control) (Amendment) Regulations to allow operators to submit documents electronically with a view to enhancing trade efficiency through the reduction of processing time and related transaction costs, and improving trade competitiveness. Operators would be able to submit supporting/additional documents online as attached documents to the application for an export permit. The process would improve ease-of-doing business, facilitate trade, and allow operators to remain competitive with regard to the "Speed-to-Market" concept of decreased lead time.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Project Plan Committee has recommended 34 projects to the tune of Rs3.3 billion for inclusion in the Public Sector Investment Programme. The projects include the renewal and upgrading of Water Supply networks in Balfour and Rose Hill; upgrading of Camp Fouquereaux Road with a new traffic scheme; renovation of the Port Louis Theatre; upgrading and widening of a link road from Glen Park to Robinson; upgrading of the road from Port Mathurin to Le Chou, Rodrigues; and construction of –

- (a) 76 housing units and associated infrastructure works at Petit Bel Air;
- (b) a multipurpose hall at Floreal State Secondary School, Goodlands State Secondary School, Sodnac State Secondary School, Seewa Bappoo State Secondary School and Dr James Burty David State Secondary School; and
- (c) a National Wholesale Market.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to mark the International Day of Forests, commemorated on 21 March. The theme for this year is **Forest and Climate Change**. Activities that would be held on the occasion, include the launching of –

- (a) an afforestation programme aiming at planting 100,000 trees annually over the next five years;
- (b) a forest restoration programme with the planting of 1,000 native species of trees over an area of 2 hectares of weeded forests at Mon Vert, Curepipe;
- (c) programmes for the propagation of endemic and native species, as well as exotic species of plants; and
- (d) a sensitization campaign to raise awareness on the importance of forests and climate change.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Second Coordination and Consultative Meeting would be held in Mauritius in April 2015 in the context of the implementation of the IAEA regional technical cooperation project RAF/5072 *'Exploring the use of Sterile Insect Technique as a Novel Technique for Control of Vector Mosquito for Chikungunya and Dengue (Aedes albopictus) in the Indian Ocean Region'*. The objectives of the Second Coordination and Consultative Meeting would be to -

- (a) conduct a progress evaluation from the first meeting;
- (b) review the project workplan and agree on the activities for the final year of the project with the project counterparts;
- (c) implement lessons learnt for the planned future key actions to be taken by each participating country and present activities carried out in 2014; and
- (d) conduct a workshop on baseline and data analysis.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Attorney General and the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms to the United Kingdom, where they participated in the Global Law Summit. The Summit is a unique collaboration between the Government of the United Kingdom, the Legal Sector and the City of London to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta and to explore how, to this day, its value offers solutions to achieving political and social goals.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of –
- (a) the Financial Services Consultative Council with the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms as Chairperson; and
 - (b) the Board of St. Antoine Planters Cooperative Trust with Mr Purushotam Lochun as Chairperson.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Avineshwur Raj Dayal, Barrister-at-Law as Head of the Conciliation Service of the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. The Conciliation Service has been set up to ease the process of settling apprehended disputes that are reported to the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms.
