

CABINET DECISIONS – 13 MAY 2016

1. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the recommendations made by the Office of the Public Sector Governance (OPSG) in its Report on the Reorganisation of the Cooperatives Division of the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives, in line with Government objective to further strengthen the Cooperative Sector. The OPSG has, *inter alia*, made the following recommendations -

- (a) creation of a new Cooperative Audit Unit to provide audit services to cooperative societies in line with good governance and best international practices;
- (b) review of the process of auditing of financial statements of cooperative societies;
- (c) amendment to the Cooperatives Act to provide for appropriate sanctions against cooperative societies which do not submit their financial statements within the prescribed time limit; and
- (d) consolidation of the cooperative movement in Rodrigues.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection making the Mauritius Standards Bureau (National Management System Certification Scheme) (Amendment) Regulations to incorporate a new Management System Certification Scheme, namely the National Sustainable Tourism Management System Certification Scheme, MS 165. The aim of the Certification Scheme is to promote sustainable tourism in Mauritius for any tourism business or any tourism-related activity. It covers four main themes, namely -

- (a) sustainable management;
- (b) social and economic benefits to the community;
- (c) cultural heritage values; and
- (d) environmental respects.

The Certification, MS165, to the Standard would help tourism enterprises enhance corporate image, differentiate product and services, and improve environmental performance.

3. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications, 91,992 tourists visited Mauritius in April 2016 as compared to 90,327 in April 2015, i.e., an increase of 1.8%. Growth had been registered in arrivals from Germany (+20.7%), France (+13.2%), India (+6.1%) and Italy (+2.3%).

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) would organise a *Salon des Entreprises Mauriciennes* from 19 to 22 May 2016. The *Salon* would provide a platform for SMEs to exhibit and sell goods produced locally. Some 125 SMEs involved in sectors, such as textiles, garments, footwear, furniture, handicraft, metal and light engineering, printing, food and agro-industry, plastic, chemicals and detergents, would participate in the event. SME service providers, such as MauBank, the State Bank of Mauritius, the Development Bank of Mauritius, Enterprise Mauritius, the National Women Entrepreneur Council, the Mauritius Standards Bureau, the Food and Agricultural Research Extension Institute, the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council, and the National Institute for Cooperative Entrepreneurship, would provide free business advice, counselling, technical information and other related services to entrepreneurs.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark the World Environment Day 2016 commemorated on 5 June. The theme chosen by the United Nations Environment Programme this year is “**Go Wild for Life**”. In line with the vision of Government, the local theme chosen for the Day is “**Technological Innovations for Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection**”. The Ministry of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management would organise -

- (a) a Regional Fair to showcase technological innovation, as well as novel and creative environmental applications pertaining to environmentally friendly products, projects undertaken to safeguard and enhance the environment, and the preservation and conservation of endangered species;
- (b) sensitization programmes on environment protection;
- (c) the award of prizes for the "*Embellir Maurice*" competition; and
- (d) a clean-up campaign with the cooperation of voluntary associations.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the Export-Oriented Enterprises Sector during the first quarter of 2016, as compared to the same period in 2015. Increase had been recorded in the value of exports of textile and clothing, pullovers, trousers, medical devices. Growth had been recorded in exports to France, Italy and South Africa. The Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection has taken various measures to boost exports, namely -

- (a) an extensive campaign in traditional markets, i.e., USA, France, and the UK, alongside those in the Gulf countries, Australia, and the Czech Republic;
- (b) preparation of a Master Plan on the Jewellery Sector to bring new dynamism to the Sector; and
- (c) validation of the National Export Strategy.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation to Geneva, where he participated in the World Summit on Information Society Forum 2016. The objectives of the Summit were to discuss the role of ICT as a means of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets with due regard to the global mechanism for follow-up on, and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

In the margins of the Forum, the Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation had discussions with HE Mr Houlin Zhao, Secretary General of the International Telecommunication Union, on the consolidation of the Regional Centre of Excellence in Mauritius, and Mr Akram Atalah, President and CEO of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), on the redelegation of the domain name **dot mu**.

The Minister of Technology, Communication and Innovation also proceeded to Paris where he met, among others, Mr Ottmar Kugelmann, Senior Director, Oracle Education for Eastern Central Europe, Middle-East and Africa who agreed to the setting up of an Oracle University courses delivery centre in Mauritius.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security to Senegal where he participated in the 103rd Session of the ACP Council of Ministers, and the 42nd Session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers. The main focus of the ACP Council was to prepare for the 8th Summit of the ACP Head of States and Governments scheduled for June 2016 under the theme "*Repositioning the ACP Group to respond to the challenges of Sustainable Development*". The topics, discussed during the 42nd Session of the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, included the alignment of the priorities of the ACP-EU partnership to the Sustainable Development Goals, and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) with Mr Hemraj Woodun as Chairperson.
