

CABINET DECISIONS – 22 April 2016

1. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms conducting a review of the activities and management of, and decisions taken by the Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd from 2010 to date.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the National Wage Consultative Council Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to provide for the establishment of a National Wage Consultative Council that would be responsible to make recommendations to Government on the introduction of a national minimum wage in the private and public sectors and the payment of an additional remuneration to offset any increase in the cost of living every year. The Council would comprise, among others, representatives of social partners, i.e., Government, employers and workers, as well as consumer organisations.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Protection of the Elderly Persons Act 2005 being reviewed to make better provision to enhance the level of protection and security to the elderly in line with Government Programme 2015-2019. It is, among others, proposed to give more powers to the officer-in-charge of the Elderly Persons' Protection Unit, particularly, in cases of abuse of elderly, to summon any person with a view to seeking information as may be necessary. A penalty would be provided for any person who fails to attend to the summon of the officer-in-charge of the Elderly Persons' Protection Unit.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the National Women's Council Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Bill is to provide for a modern and appropriate legislative framework to further empower women and promote gender equality through the active participation of women in the social, economic and political fields. The Bill also makes better provision for the functioning of the new National Women's Council in order to provide a platform to women to voice their needs, concerns and aspirations, and improves the regulation of Women Associations and the management of the Regional Committees responsible for the activities of Women Associations. The National Women's Council Act 1985 would be repealed.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the Rehabilitation Youth Centre Strategic Plan 2015-2025 - A Therapeutic Approach, prepared with the assistance of Mr William Cullen, Correctional Consultant and UNODC Expert. The main objective of the Plan is to give each child the opportunity to acquire knowledge, develop potential and adjust behaviour in order to facilitate his re-integration with the family and the community. The Strategic Plan proposes a therapeutic approach whereby emphasis will be laid on creating a sense of community to instil in the residents a vision of "right living" based upon honesty, responsibility, work ethic and active and continual emotional development and learning.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the International Expert Meeting on the validation of the Inter-Country Quality Node for Early Childhood Development (ICQN-ECD) Strategic Plan (2016-2018) would be held in Mauritius in May 2016. The Inter-Country Quality Node (ICQN) was created by the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) to develop and promote African-led education and training solutions to address national and regional needs. The Node acts as catalyst in the process of store-housing diversely-sourced information generated from innovative educational experiences in Africa. The Strategic Plan has identified four main objectives, namely –

- (a) serve as a forum for advocacy and policy dialogue to translate evidence into effective policies;
- (b) act as a regional platform for capacity building and peer-learning so as to, among others, catalyse Early Childhood Development training opportunities for African countries;
- (c) facilitate knowledge sharing and dissemination, partnership building, and celebrating African successes within the regional community of practice; and
- (d) strengthen management and organisational capacity.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of cancer with the Luzerner Kantonsspital, Spitalstr.10 of Switzerland. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are, *inter alia*, to –

- (a) provide technical support for the establishment of the National Cancer Centre, including the design and construction of bunkers;
- (b) provide capacity building and hands on training to staff working in the Radiotherapy Centre with special regard to the planned National Cancer Centre in Mauritius;
- (c) share protocols and guidelines and support in defining evidence-based treatment protocols tailored for the health care system in Mauritius;
- (d) support the optimization of treatment through a multidisciplinary approach in order to achieve the highest quality of care for patients; and
- (e) provide access to expert opinion for the management of complicated cases of cancer.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security, the Missouri Botanical Garden, USA, and the Mauritian Wildlife Foundation would sign a Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration in the conservation of our endemic flora. The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to enhance technical, scientific and educational cooperation and encourage collaboration in joint projects and programmes related to botanical research, conservation and education. The cooperation would be beneficial in the development of long term research and monitoring of the national flora conservation programmes, and also assist in the protection of all critically endangered species.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the introduction of nanotechnology as an innovative and potential niche area in economic exploitation for Mauritius. In this context, a Workshop was organised by the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation in collaboration with the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research, India. Nanotechnology is an emerging technology, which has influenced various industrial segments, including health care, medical devices, pharmaceuticals, paints and coatings, electronics, food and agriculture, smart textiles, cosmetics, energy and clean technologies. The main objectives of the Workshop were, among others, to –

- (a) promote an understanding of nanotechnology as it applies to basic and applied research;
- (b) discuss practical aspects of nanotechnology relating to biomedical, industrial and computational applications; and
- (c) discuss opportunities for the development of nanotechnology and nano-based materials in various industrial sectors in Mauritius.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the India-Mauritius Global Partnership Conference by the India Mauritius Trade and Cultural Friendship Forum would be held in Mauritius in July 2016. The Forum was launched in April 2015 following the visit of the Indian Prime Minister in Mauritius to further boost cooperation in the field of trade, and arts and culture between India and Mauritius. The main objectives of the Conference will be to bring together eminent intellectuals, successful businessmen, potential investors and prominent artists of the Indian Diaspora to showcase and promote partnership opportunities in various fields of socio-economic activity. Some 300 foreign participants are expected to attend the Conference.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Social Integration and Economic Empowerment to South Africa where he participated in the Habitat III Thematic Meeting on Informal Settlements – “*Leading change in the City: from slum to integrated, safe, resilient and sustainable settlement*”. The objective of the Meeting was to come up with a Declaration for the inclusion of slums upgrading as part of the New Urban Agenda for the 21st century and Habitat III, which would be finalised at the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development scheduled for October 2016.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives to Dubai, United Arab Emirates where he participated in –

- (a) the Sixth Edition of the Annual Investment Meeting. The theme of the Meeting was '*The New World of FDI, Key Features and Best Practices*'. The main objective of the Meeting was to discuss the importance of new forms of investment, policies that promote such investments, best practices, and ways and means to attract investment from new investment reservoirs coming from emerging markets; and
- (b) the Second Ministerial Economic and Business Conference of the IORA. The key theme of the Conference was '*Innovation and Small and Medium Sized Enterprises*'. The Conference provided a forum for Government-to-Government, Business-to-Government and Business-to-Business engagement to share best practices in trade, industry and investment-focused on SMEs and innovation, and forge a common vision and strategy for SMEs to become a fundamental economic initiative and a vital source of economic growth, income generation and job creation in the region.
