

## **CABINET DECISIONS – 29 APRIL 2016**

1. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, would be on an Official Visit to Mauritius from 8 to 10 May 2016. HE Mr Ban Ki-moon would be accompanied by his spouse and a delegation of 13 members. During his visit, HE Mr Ban Ki-moon would, among others, -

- (a) pay a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Mauritius;
- (b) have a *tête-à-tête* with the Prime Minister, followed by a working session and a statement to the Media;
- (c) have a meeting with stakeholders engaged in the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals - The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (d) address the International Council for Commercial Arbitration Congress; and
- (e) visit the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site, and Le Morne Cultural Landscape and UNESCO World Heritage Site.

HE Mr Ban Ki-moon would also be awarded a Degree of Doctor *Honoris Causa* by the University of Mauritius.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of measures to revamp the Handicraft Sector to make it economically viable. The measures include -

- (a) the setting up of a Handicraft Training Academy, incorporating a Mauritian Craft Lab and a Research and Development Unit, to provide technologies for manufacturing and work sheds for artisans to develop new products;
- (b) the review of the label 'Genuinely Mauritius', and the commissioning of a modern, appealing and striking label;
- (c) the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Mauritius Duty Free Paradise, and the *Association des Hôteliers et Restaurateurs de l'île Maurice* (AHRIM) for the display and sale of local handicraft products;
- (d) the development of a market strategy and organization of local and international fairs regrouping artisans;
- (e) use of innovative technology to confer a comparative advantage on improving the competitiveness of the handicraft items; and
- (f) patenting of designs of handicraft items and protection of artistic works of artisans through the Copyright Act.

A Ministerial Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications, has been set up to look into new avenues of marketing of local handicraft products.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms conducting Mystery Shopping exercise in Ministries/Departments to gauge the level of services provided to citizens. Mystery Shopping is a tool used to, anonymously, gather specific information on the quality of services provided to customers, and measure the level of compliance of services offered with the organisational norms and standards. The main objectives of the exercise are to identify organisational strengths and weaknesses, and initiate appropriate measures to improve the level of service delivery for the benefit of customers.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the signature of an '*Accord d'établissement de Commission Mixte*' for the establishment of a Joint Commission between Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire. The purpose of the Joint Commission will be to consolidate bilateral relations between Mauritius and Côte d'Ivoire and find ways and means to boost collaboration in the economic, technical, scientific and cultural fields.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the Mauritius Meteorological Services and Particip GmbH, Germany, signing a Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the implementation of on-site training within the framework of the implementation of the training strategy of the Monitoring for Environment and Security in Africa (MESA) Programme. The overall objective of the Programme is to support African decision-makers and planners in designing and implementing national, regional and continental policies and development plans towards sustainable development with a view to advancing the socio-economic progress and well-being of African populations towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to establish the general modalities for the joint implementation of MESA training activities, and define the overall areas of collaboration. Particip GmbH has been designated as the lead institution of a consortium responsible for delivering on-site training for the implementation of the Programme for the component focusing on capacity building for weather forecasting through access to satellite data and imageries.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications to Côte d'Ivoire where he participated, as Chief Guest, in the Fifth Edition of the Annual Economic Forum of the '*Confédération Générale des Entreprises de Côte d'Ivoire*'. The theme of the Forum was "***Tu as un projet, j'ai de l'argent, entreprenons ensemble.***" The Forum focused on access to finance by private enterprises, Government support to their development, and youth empowerment in entrepreneurship, with emphasis on the role of SMEs in the economic development of Côte d'Ivoire.

In the margins of the Forum, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications had a *tête-à-tête* with the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire with whom he discussed issues of mutual interest, including cooperation in the fields of tourism, textile, air connectivity, and the signing of a Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement. He also signed an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement providing for the protection of investments made by local investors and a framework agreement with Côte d'Ivoire providing the basis for economic, financial and technical cooperation.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications also proceeded to Ghana where he had a meeting, *inter alia*, with the President, Mr John Dramani Mahama on the status on the Dawa Special Economic Zone project, the signing of the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement, and the conclusion of an Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the findings of the 2015 Survey on Household Out-of-pocket Expenditure on Health. The objectives of the Survey were, *inter alia*, to -

- (a) determine the extent of catastrophic expenditure on health;
- (b) assess health service utilization rate by households; and
- (c) estimate the magnitude of financial risk protection mechanisms among households seeking care and treatment in the private sector.

The Survey revealed, among others, that for the Financial Year 2014, -

- (a) households' spending on health amounted to approximately Rs10.81 billion;
- (b) hypertension and diabetes were at the top of the list of the most commonly reported diseases; and
- (c) public health institutions remain the main providers of health care services.

The results of the survey would be used to develop the National Health Accounts 2015 in line with "A System of Health Accounts 2011" produced by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Eurostat and the World Health Organization.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life, in collaboration with the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare and the Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions, will conduct an aggressive sensitization campaign on the prevention and management of non-communicable diseases.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that the Fourth Edition of the WebCup 2016 and the First Edition of Startup Weekend 2016 would be organised in May 2016. The WebCup 2016 is a 24-hour non-stop competition where teams, comprising amateurs and professionals of each of the participating countries, compete simultaneously to design a website in a relatively high tech environment. The Startup Weekend, an American initiative, would bring together developers, startup enthusiasts, graphic artists, entrepreneurs, investors and students to build teams, share ideas and create startup companies. The theme retained for this year is '*Smartcities*'. The organisation of the competitions is an example of public-private partnership, and is in line with the objective of Government to consolidate Mauritius as an ICT hub in the region.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised to mark the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, observed on 17 May. The theme for this year is "**ICT entrepreneurship for social impact**". Activities would include the holding of a one-day workshop to raise awareness around the enormous possibilities that the Internet and ICT can bring to societies and economies, and a sensitization campaign on the benefits and opportunities of ICT in everyday life. Telecommunication and ICT operators have also been invited to organise events around the theme.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised in the context of the International Day of Families, observed on 15 May. The theme for this year is "**Families, healthy lives and sustainable future**". The Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would organise a series of activities, namely -

- (a) "*Le Mur des Valeurs*", a mural painting activity based on core values emanating from the Charter on Family Values aiming at placing values at the centre of family life;
- (b) a Family Day at the Esplanade of Port-Louis Waterfront to encourage families to participate collectively in activities that would contribute towards family bonding;
- (c) a Training of Trainers Programme on Family Values; and
- (d) a half-day workshop on "Population Dynamics: Population Growth – Key Challenges".

The Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare is making arrangements for families to spend their leisure time during the weekends of 14 and 15, and 21 and 22 May 2016 in places of attractions at discounted prices.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research to South Africa where she participated in a Ministerial Meeting on the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in respect of the African Square Kilometre Array project. The project, the biggest and most powerful telescope in the world with a collecting area of one million square metres, would survey the sky and provide the highest resolution images in astronomy. The Memorandum of Understanding would provide, among others, for partner countries, i.e., South Africa as the lead partner, Botswana, Ghana, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia to ensure synergy in the management of the Square Kilometre Array, with the intention of avoiding any duplication of efforts and streamlining the coordination mechanism.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research had discussions with -

- (a) the School of Health Sciences, University of Pretoria on possibilities of collaboration with the School of Medical Sciences of the University of Technology, Mauritius in the growth of Postgraduate Health Programmes; and
- (b) the delegation from the Ministry of Higher Education of Madagascar on the eventual signature of the Memorandum of Understanding on Science and Technology.

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12. Cabinet has agreed to tenders being invited for the implementation of a new project for the production of electricity from Mare Chicose landfill gas on the expiry of the current landfill Gas-to-Energy Project. Landfill operations at Mare Chicose would be on-going until 2019, and the gas extraction rate is estimated to be higher than 2000 Nm<sup>3</sup>/hr between 2016 and 2025.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands to India, where he participated in the Maritime India Summit 2016. The Summit was a maiden flagship initiative of the Ministry of Shipping, Government of India, to provide a unique global platform for investors to explore potential business opportunities in the Indian Maritime Sector. The Summit emphasized on the need for the application of latest technology, *inter alia*, in port development, green initiatives, cruise shipping and lighthouse tourism.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands had meetings, among others, with -

- (a) Hon Shri Radha Mohan Singh, Minister of Agriculture of India, on issues pertaining to fisheries and aquaculture;
- (b) Hon Dr Harsh Vardhan, Minister of Earth Sciences of India, regarding the formulation of a strategy for sustainable development of the ocean economy; and

- (c) Hon Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways of India, regarding the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Aids to Navigation.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the recent mission of the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management to Egypt where he participated in the Sixth Special Session of African Ministerial Conference on Environment (AMCEN). The theme of the Conference was: "**Agenda 2030 and Paris Agreement: from policy to implementation in Africa**". The objective of the AMCEN Meeting was to provide an opportunity to Ministers and Experts to deliberate on how to move forward with regard to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Africa.

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