

**CABINET DECISIONS – 12 FEBRUARY 2016**

1. Cabinet has taken note that, following the recent meeting of the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms with the Commonwealth Secretariat on the issue of good governance and the setting up of the Integrity Reporting Services Agency and the Integrity Reporting Board, the Secretariat has agreed to disseminate the requirements of the post of Chairperson of the Integrity Reporting Board and invite expression of interest from retired judges from Commonwealth States. The Secretariat has also published on its website the measures taken by Government to address governance issues.

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2. Cabinet has reviewed the situation across the country following the heavy rainfall on 10 February 2016.

Cabinet has taken note that –

- (a) the Ministerial Committee, under the Chairmanship of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands, has, among others, decided to construct, improve and maintain drains where necessary, and clean water courses;
- (b) some 1,500 persons took refuge in the various refugee centres. The Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions has made arrangements for the payment of allowances, as appropriate; and
- (c) the National Disaster Risk Reduction Management Centre, with the collaboration of the SMF, the National Coast Guard, and the Government Fire Services, attended to flooded areas, undertook rescue operations and arranged for the cleaning of debris.

Cabinet has also taken note that, according to a report of the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI), the food crop sector has suffered some damage. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security would distribute seeds to affected farmers to enable them to relaunch their activities. Moreover, the Agricultural Marketing Board has decided to reduce the price of potato and onion in the coming weeks.

Cabinet has further taken note of preventive measures taken by the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life to avoid the spread of mosquito borne diseases. The public is advised to boil water before drinking, and wash hands at regular intervals. Appropriate measures should also be taken to prevent stagnation of water.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that Bloomberg UK proposes to organize a workshop on “Mauritius as a Financial Platform for Africa”. The event would be held on the premises of Bloomberg in June 2016 with key London-based financial services stakeholders and necessary media coverage.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of discussions held during the recent visit of HE Mr Wang Yi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, to Mauritius. The issues discussed, include, –

- (a) the signing of a Treaty on Extradition, and a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters;
- (b) assistance for the construction of the National Archives and the National Library, as well as the setting up of the Civil Service College; and
- (c) the possibility of setting up a China-Africa Arbitration Centre in Mauritius.

The Chinese authorities were agreeable to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on maritime cooperation, and a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of the Confucius Institute within the University of Mauritius.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the International Women's Day Celebration, the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would launch the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment Award to encourage and reward organisations to empower women. Entries would be invited in seven categories based on the Women's Empowerment Principles.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms approving the proposal of the Special Administrator, appointed for BAI and its related companies, to transfer the assets of the Bramer Banking Corporation Ltd to the National Property Fund Ltd under the provision of the Insurance Act. The Special Administrator has started the process of winding up procedures of BAI and its related companies, that include the assets of Bramer Banking Corporation Ltd. The assets recovered would contribute towards the repayment to policyholders of the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme, and investors of the Bramer Asset Management Ltd as per the repayment plan of the National Property Fund Ltd.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that Ms Julia Gillard, Ducere Chancellor and former Prime Minister of Australia, would visit Mauritius from 19 to 22 February 2016. She would, among others, launch a story booklet entitled '*African Children's Stories*' in the context of the Ducere Programme. The Ducere Foundation is an Australian-based non-profit organization that carries out projects focusing to a large extent on education throughout Africa.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that the Report on “Opportunity Assessment for the Development of Geothermal Energy in Mauritius”, prepared by ELC Electroconsult S.p.A. of Italy, would be made public. The Consultants carried out –

- (a) a geological study on the structural and strati-graphic conditions in Mauritius;
- (b) a geochemistry study which consisted of the analysis of water samples collected from dug wells; and
- (c) a study of the thermal gradient which consisted of measuring the temperature in the borehole drilled for the purpose of the investigation.

The Consultants have concluded that there is no geochemical indication on the possible presence of geothermal system at depth in Mauritius.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to an independent committee comprising, *inter-alia*, representatives of Government, the private sector, the civil society, the academia and other regulatory institutions, to serve as the Mauritius National Governing Committee for the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) following the dissolution of the National Economic and Social Council. The main objective of the APRM is to ensure that the policies and practices of participating States conform to agreed democratic, political, economic and corporate governance values. 35 African countries are members of the APRM and they peer review each other on the basis of these values.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the Local Government Act 2011 being amended to provide for the local rate in relation to any immovable property to be determined in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Act 1989, until such time as the cadastral value of the immovable property is determined.

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11. Cabinet has agreed to the Retainer Agreement of the firm Ryberg and Smith L.L.P. being extended for a further period of one year. The firm represents the interests of Mauritius in relation to the Trade Preferences Extension Act 2015, which extended AGOA preferences for 10 years as from 1 October 2015.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare on the occasion of the International Women's Day 2016, celebrated on 8 March. The theme chosen is "*Championing Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls*". The Official Ceremony would be held on 8 March 2016, with the participation of representatives from the public and private sectors and Civil Society organizations. Other activities that would be organized include, –

- (a) the launching of a national campaign around the slogan "*egalite zom/fam: nu l'obzektif*";
- (b) a national dialogue on Championing Goal 5 of Sustainable Development Goals: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
- (c) Award Ceremony around the theme: "Women Centres: Embracing Change for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment"; and
- (d) launching of a Business Hub for Women Entrepreneurs.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the President of the Republic of Mauritius participated in the 26<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the African Union (AU) held in Ethiopia. Heads of State and Government and other Heads of Delegations deliberated on the issues of Governance in Africa and the financial situation of the Union. The decisions adopted by the Assembly are, among others, -

- (a) Domestication of Agenda 2063 and its 10-year Implementation Plan;
- (b) Constitution of a High Level Committee on Science and Technology;
- (c) Implementation of decisions on the International Criminal Court; and
- (d) Endorsement of the candidature of Judge Eddy Balancy to be elected as member of the UN Economic and Social Council.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms to the United Kingdom. The Minister had meetings, among others, with –

- (a) Lord Mountevans, Lord Mayor of London on the collaboration model to be adopted between the City of London and Mauritius in the financial and legal services sector. The Lord Mayor proposes to lead a strong financial services business delegation in early March 2016. The visit would coincide with the official launching of the Mauritius International Financial Centre;
- (b) representatives of UK headquartered international law firms on the setting up of full-fledged operations in Mauritius; and

- (c) leading UK based captive insurance companies that have shown interest to set up Captive Management Companies in Mauritius. The Financial Services Commission would, shortly finalize the Captive Insurance Rules and the insurance companies, Willis Towers Watson and Marsh Captives Solutions, would assist in the preparation of the Rules.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands to Rodrigues. The purpose of the visit was, *inter alia*, to take stock of the programmes/activities regarding the ocean economy, and align ocean-related activities in Rodrigues with the policy of Government, taking into consideration the specificity of Rodrigues. The Minister also discussed –

- (a) fisheries, with particular focus on aquaculture;
- (b) participation in the Rodrigues Training and Career Guidance Fair 2016; and
- (c) setting up of an antenna of the Mauritius Oceanography Institute and a Seafarers' Welfare Fund Desk.

On the occasion, the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd. offered five scholarships to Rodriguans with a view to sustaining the future supply of personnel on board ships.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of progress in the implementation of the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) Project by the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms. The implementation of the project would, *inter alia*, -

- (a) enhance the administrative capability of Ministries/Departments to perform strategic human resource management and to make optimal use of resources;
- (b) eliminate a host of manual operations to give way to an almost paperless work environment; and
- (c) bring in a digital revolution as well as a major paradigm shift in the civil service by strengthening the principles of good governance, transparency and accountability.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the constitution of the Water Advisory Council with Mr Mohammad Oumar Kholeejan, Lord Mayor of Port Louis, as Chairperson.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Human Resource Development Council with Mr L.A. Guiness Balnock as Chairperson.

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