

CABINET DECISIONS – 2 DECEMBER 2016

1. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Bill and the Constitution (Amendment No. 2) Bill in the National Assembly. The object of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Bill is to reform the electoral system in Rodrigues by providing for -

- (a) a minimum number of candidates for election to the Regional Assembly to be of particular sex; and
- (b) a more equitable representation of parties in the Regional Assembly.

The Bill, accordingly, lays down that -

- (a) the Regional Assembly shall consist of -
 - (i) 12 local region members (2 for each of the 6 regions) elected on the first past the post basis;
 - (ii) 5 Island region members, instead of 6, elected under the current Proportional Representation (PR) system; and
 - (iii) additional seats, where needed, to ensure an overall majority of 3 seats to the party which has won 7 or more local region seats;
- (b) each registered party presenting more than 2 candidates at an ordinary election, shall ensure that not more than two thirds of the total number of candidates of that party in the 6 local regions are of the same sex; and
- (c) a registered party may file a Party List, which shall -
 - (i) contain the names of not more than 12 persons;
 - (ii) not include the name of a person -
 - (a) whose name is included on any other list submitted by a registered party for election as member for the Island region;
 - (b) who is a registered party candidate for election as member for a local region;
 - (iii) not comprise more than two thirds of persons of the same sex; and
 - (iv) indicate the order of precedence of each candidate appearing on the list, provided that not more than 2 consecutive candidates on the list shall be of the same sex.

The object of the Constitution (Amendment No. 2) Bill is to amend the Constitution to provide for a minimum number of candidates for election to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly to be of a particular sex, with a view to ensuring adequate representation of each sex in the Rodrigues Regional Assembly.

The Rodrigues Regional Assembly has given its concurrence to the Rodrigues Regional Assembly (Amendment) Bill.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Rt Hon Sir Anerood Jugnauth, GCSK, KCMG, QC, Prime Minister, to Madagascar where he participated in the *XVIème Sommet de la Francophonie*. The theme of the Summit was '***Croissance partagée et développement responsable: les conditions de la stabilité du monde et de l'espace francophone***'. The issues discussed at the Summit included women rights, climate change, and peace and security matters, particularly the terror attacks in member States of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* (OIF).

During his intervention at the Summit, the Prime Minister, among others, emphasized on the need for international law to prevail on land and sea territories, and called upon all members of the *Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie* to support Mauritius at the UN General Assembly to secure the adoption of the resolution seeking an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the excision of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius before its independence.

The Summit adopted 13 resolutions on issues, such as early and forced marriages, the creation of an entity for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, vocational and technical training, decentralisation and local development, and investment in the Health Sector. A resolution on the Blue Economy was also adopted following a proposal by Mauritius.

In the margins of the Summit, the Prime Minister had a meeting with the President of Madagascar on bilateral cooperation, and the need to move fast within the Joint Commission framework to take discussions to the next level on many initiatives of common interest, including fisheries, trade, tourism, the Special Economic Zone in Fort Dauphin, and the reinforcement of partnership between Air Mauritius and Air Madagascar. The Prime Minister also met the Prime Minister of Canada, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Serbia, the President of the Seychelles, the President of the Union of Comoros, and the Secretary General of the OIF, and raised the issue of sovereignty of Mauritius over the Chagos Archipelago and the contention with the United Kingdom.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security taking appropriate measures to address the problem of fruit losses, particularly litchis and mangoes, caused by bats. Damage to unprotected litchi trees by bats in backyard gardens ranges from 30% to 50%. As from September 2016, the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is implementing the Fruit Protection Scheme under which planters and backyard tree owners are provided with a subsidy of 75% on the cost of nets used to protect litchi and mango trees from damages caused by bats.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the ratification of the Montreal Convention 1999. The Convention, which was signed in May 1999, –

- (a) establishes a modern, fair and effective regime to govern airline liability to passengers and shippers on international flights;
- (b) establishes uniformity and predictability of rules relating to the international carriage of passengers, baggages and cargoes;

- (c) protects the interests of passengers;
- (d) facilitates the swift recovery of proven damages without the need for lengthy litigation; and
- (e) seeks to increase the compensation levels for international passengers in the event of death or body injury, and damage and delay to the passenger baggages and cargoes.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms advising the President of the Republic to make the Civil Establishment Order 2016 and the Civil Establishment (Rodrigues Regional Assembly) Order 2016. The Orders establish offices in the public service, determine the number of persons who may be appointed to such offices and the emoluments to be attached to such offices.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation, in collaboration with the National Computer Board and IST-Africa, would organise a Workshop on the EU Horizon 2020 Research Programme in December 2016. Horizon 2020, that started in January 2014, is a financial instrument to implement research and innovation as a means of driving economic growth and job creation. Some 60 local participants with a mix of thematic expertise relevant to Mauritius, including health, agriculture, environment and ICT experts, would attend the Workshop.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the 6th Africa Regional Platform on Disaster Risk Reduction, the 5th High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction and the Southern African Development Community Meeting of Ministers responsible for Disaster Management that were held in Mauritius from 22 to 26 November 2016. The main objectives of the Africa Regional Platform were to review progress in the implementation of the continental and global disaster risk reduction frameworks, and share good practices and lessons learnt with a view to enhancing coordination, increasing awareness, and mobilizing commitments to disaster risk reduction. The 5th High Level Meeting on Disaster Risk Reduction adopted the Africa Programme of Action, and the Mauritius Declaration, which would be submitted to the African Union (AU) Policy Organ for consideration at the AU Summit scheduled for January 2017. The SADC Meeting of Ministers responsible for Disaster Management discussed and approved the Disaster Preparedness and Response Strategy.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications to France and the UK.

In Paris, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications had meetings, among others, with -

- (a) Ms Isabelle Gilquin and Ms Caroline Victoire, representatives of AVIAREPS, a global player in the travel and tourism industry, on strategies for further rekindling the low season and the categorization of the villas and other tourist residences; and
- (b) Mr Henri Giscard d'Estaing, PDG of Club Med, and reviewed the activities of Club Med in our main markets and on long haul destinations.

In the UK, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications attended the 37th World Travel Market and met members of British media outlets, as well as airlines and tour operator representatives, with a view to promoting the destination of Mauritius. He also visited the International Slavery Museum in Liverpool and met Dr David Fleming, Director of National Museums of Liverpool and Ms Janet Dugdale, Director of Museum of Liverpool and Merseyside Maritime Museum, in connection with the establishment of the Slavery Museum as recommended by the Truth and Justice Commission.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to France where he had meetings at the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and the *Commission de régulation de l'énergie* on the provision of technical assistance to the Utility Regulatory Authority. The AFD has expressed its willingness to fund the implementation of the Rivière des Anguilles Dam Project and support the development of water infrastructure and the introduction of new technology.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Youth and Sports to France in connection with the setting up of a National Football Academy as announced in the Budget Speech 2016-2017. In this context, the Mauritius Football Association and the Montpellier Hérault Sport Club signed a Memorandum of Understanding providing, among others, for technical assistance for the training of coaches and young people. The Minister also had a meeting with Mr Iannick Ribault, President of *Ligue du Centre-Val de Loire*, and Mr Corbé, *Conseiller Technique Sportif* of the Centre, on collaboration and exchange of young players between the Centre and the National Basketball Training Centre.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to India where, on an invitation of Prof. Balaji, a world renowned maxillo-cranio facial surgeon, he participated in the 10th World Cleft Lip and Palate Congress as Chief Guest and Keynote Speaker. The Congress is an annual global event that serves as a confluence of expertise in cleft care and as a venue to take stock of the latest technologies, and showcase up-to-date research in the management of cleft lip and palate and other craniofacial deformities. Professor Balaji, accompanied by four specialists, is currently in Mauritius to attend to patients whose cases are complex.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to China where he attended the 9th Global Conference on Health Promotion. The main objectives of the Conference were to highlight the critical links between Promoting Health and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and exchange experience in strengthening good governance for health through action across Government sectors.

In the margins of the Conference, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life had meetings, among others, with Ms Li Bin, Minister, National Health and Family Planning Commission of China, and Dr Margaret Chan, Director General of WHO, on promotion of health and how to curb Non-Communicable Diseases.
