

## **CABINET DECISIONS – 3 FEBRUARY 2017**

1. Cabinet has taken note of the meeting that the Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister, had with Mrs Christine Lagarde, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund, on 31 January, 2017. Mrs Lagarde was in Mauritius to participate in the Pan African Conference on Cross Border Banking. During the meeting, the Prime Minister and Mrs Lagarde shared views on recent developments at the international and domestic levels, and discussed on Brexit and its impact on Mauritius, as well as the changes in policies by the new US administration that may affect global and regional trade patterns. They also emphasised on the challenges and opportunities for Mauritius.

The Prime Minister highlighted Government strategy to start a New Economic Cycle that would usher in a New Era of Development. He explained that the main thrusts of the strategy would be on Infrastructure Development, ICT, Innovation and High-Value-Added Manufacturing, amongst others.

Mrs Lagarde commended the Prime Minister for the economic performance of Mauritius, and praised the initiatives being taken on the social front, including the launching of the Marshall Plan against Absolute Poverty.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that, during his visit to China in 2016 on the occasion of the 10th Session of the Sino Mauritian Joint Commission, the Hon P. K. Jugnauth, Prime Minister, had met HE Mr Zhang Ye Sui, Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, with whom he had discussed, *inter alia*, the possibility for the visa-free period for Mauritian nationals being extended from 30 to 60 days. The Chinese authorities have, now, informed that they are agreeable to the extension of the visa-free period to 60 days.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that the National SME Incubator Scheme, as announced in the Budget Speech 2016-2017, will operate on a public-private partnership principle through an accreditation system of business incubators. The objective of the Scheme is to assist young Mauritians to transform their innovative ideas into concrete business ventures and become successful entrepreneurs. The accreditation guidelines have been finalised and the Mauritius Research Council will, next week, invite applications from potential candidates.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the recommendations of the World Bank on Water Sector Reform. In 2015, the World Bank was appointed to conduct a study to evaluate the water sector reform options, including the use of public private partnership options, with a view to improving Customer Service delivery whilst focusing on achieving continuous supply, efficient use of funding for capital investments, and building domestic capacity to move towards financial sustainability of the sector. The World Bank has, *inter alia*, made the following recommendations -

- (a) the CWA, with the support of an experienced operator, could turnaround its service delivery to achieve regular supply of water all year round;
- (b) the CWA would continue to own the water distribution and supply assets, and be responsible for business planning, capital expenditure, monitoring and enforcing the operator performance, as well as setting tariffs;
- (c) the appointment of a private operator to operate and maintain the potable water distribution system of the CWA; and
- (d) the private operator should recruit employees to provide a better service to the customers.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, as at 30 January 2017, the storage level in the reservoirs was about 43% of the total capacity of 77.44 Mm<sup>3</sup>. Moreover, there has also been a decline in the level of ground water, which is below average, except for the Eastern aquifer. The Central Water Authority has, consequently, reviewed the hours of supply of water in certain regions, and taken various measures to mobilise additional water from other sources, including the operationalisation of new boreholes to supply Trianon, Ebène, Rose Hill, Beau Bassin, Plaine Magnien, Mahebourg and Port Louis, and the construction of a new pipeline to transfer raw water from Black River (National Park) to Yemen Pumping Station. The Central Water Authority is carrying out a sensitisation campaign on the judicious use of water during the dry season. The Irrigation Authority is also monitoring the use of water for irrigation purposes.

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6. Cabinet has take note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to provide for lessees to carry out ecotourism activities on State lands, against payment of an appropriate fee, as enunciated in Budget Speech 2016-2017.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that, on the occasion of the Safer Internet Day 2017, commemorated on 7 February, the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation would carry out sensitisation campaigns on Internet Safety and the safe use of Internet. The theme for this year is "**Be the change: Unite for a better Internet**".

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8. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of World Cancer Day 2017, commemorated on 4 February, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would -

- (a) carry out preventive health check-up at Dr Maurice Curé State College on 15 February 2017;

- (b) hold an exhibition on healthy life style and healthy diet;
- (c) mount sensitisation campaigns on the risk factors of cancer and the preventive measures to be taken; and
- (d) carry out screening for breast and cervical cancer.

The theme chosen to mark World Cancer Day for the period 2016 to 2018 is '**We can. I can**'.

Cabinet has also taken note of the status in the implementation of the Cancer Centre Project.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to Abu Dhabi where he participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The Assembly focused on IRENA's strategic and programmatic direction to assist countries in deploying renewable energy, and meet climate and sustainable development goals. Roundtables, covering innovation in the power sector, and catalysing off-grid renewable energy deployment for development, were also held. The Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities is working on project proposals for submission to IRENA for funding under the IRENA/Abu Dhabi Fund for Development Project Facility.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives to India. During the visit, Memoranda of Understanding on the development of the cooperatives sector were signed with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare of India and the Vaikunth Mehta National Institute for Cooperative Management of Pune. The Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India has agreed to provide technical support to develop the Business Development and Facilitation Centres which are serving as incubators for small and medium enterprises in Mauritius.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the Annual Report of the Town and Country Planning Board for the year ended 31 December 2015.

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