

CABINET DECISIONS – 16 MARCH 2018

1. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing the Agreement establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area (CFTA). The Agreement includes three Protocols, namely, the Protocol on Trade in Goods, the Protocol on Trade in Services and the Protocol on Dispute Settlement. The main objective of the Agreement is to create a single continental market for goods and services, free of tariff and regulatory barriers.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the first meeting of the Joint Committee under the Protocol to the Fisheries Partnership Agreement between the Republic of Mauritius and the European Union. The objective of the Joint Committee is to monitor the implementation of the Protocol. Both sides agreed on the activities under the sectoral support programme. The priority areas will be –

- (a) surveillance and scientific observation;
- (b) fisheries management;
- (c) development of off-lagoon fisheries (both artisanal and semi-industrial); and
- (d) research and development in the fields of aquaculture and marine biotechnology.

3. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism, 115,600 tourists visited Mauritius in February 2018 as compared to 105,049 in February 2017, i.e., an increase of 10.0%. Growth has been registered in arrivals from Germany (+45.7%), United Kingdom (+9.9%), France (+4.0%), Italy (+1.4%), China (+45.3%), South Africa (+27.8%), Saudi Arabia (+84.8%), Netherlands (+69.5%), Spain (+31.0%), Czech Republic (+29.3%), Australia (+21.2%) and Switzerland (+6.0%).

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Centre for Public Service Innovation of South Africa would host the United Nations Public Administration Network (UNPAN) Workshop in Mauritius in May 2018. The main objective of the Workshop is to create a platform for senior public officials from SADC Member States to discuss and share knowledge on good public administration and management practices and how to improve the ways and means by which the UNPAN portal could better support the development of efficient and effective public administration systems and competencies. Some 40 to 50 delegates from SADC countries are expected to attend the Workshop.

5. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister Mentor, Minister of Defence, and Minister for Rodrigues to India where he participated in the Uttar Pradesh Investors Summit and proceeded on an official visit at the invitation of the Minister of Defence of India. The Summit aimed at showcasing the investment opportunities and potential in the various sectors of Uttar Pradesh and offered a global platform, that brought together Heads of States and Governments, Ministers, leaders from the corporate world, senior policy makers, heads of international institutions and academia from around the world to further the cause of economic development in the State and promote cooperation. The State Government of Uttar Pradesh is providing two acres of land in Varanasi to Mauritius to set up the Uttar Pradesh Mauritius Pravasi Bhawan that will have as main objective to connect the Indian Diaspora with their roots in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In the margins of the Summit, the Minister Mentor had meetings with the Chief Minister, and the Governor of Uttar Pradesh and discussed cooperation between Mauritius and Uttar Pradesh.

During his official visit in New Delhi, the Minister Mentor met the Minister of Defence of India and discussions focused on cooperation, namely in areas such as infrastructure development, economy and trade, education and capacity building, culture and maritime security.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Tourism to Germany where he attended the Internationale Tourismus Borse (ITB) which is the leading Travel Trade Show. The MTPA participated in the ITB along with 45 Mauritian stakeholders, including hoteliers, Destination Management Companies, AHRIM, Air Mauritius, Associations of small operators, and representatives of the Commission for Tourism of Rodrigues. Meetings were organised, among others, with MTPA PR Representatives in Europe and top management of airlines. The Minister also had a meeting with HE Nikolina Angelkova, Minister of Tourism of the Republic of Bulgaria regarding the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Tourism. Destination Mauritius was awarded the 'Best Partner Award' by the popular German 'Klassik Radio'.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to Sudan where she participated in the 10th Meeting of the COMESA Ministers Responsible for Gender and Women's Affairs, an annual event where Ministers are invited to note progress on the implementation of the programmes of the COMESA and consider other gender mainstreaming initiatives. Presentations were made on the implementation of policy measures pertaining to gender equality and women empowerment in their respective countries. In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare had discussions with –

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- (a) Mrs Katherine Ichoya, Chief Executive Officer of the Federation of National Associations of Women in Business in Eastern and Southern Africa (FEMCOM) on collaboration between FEMCOM and the National Women Entrepreneur Council and the Mauritius FEMCOM Chapter; and
- (b) Dr Kipyego Cheluget, Assistant Secretary General of COMESA on the role played by COMESA in enhancing gender equality and women empowerment.

8. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of the official launch of the 'Sports for All Programme 2017-2018', a 12-Hour National Relay Walk, Jog and Run for Health and Fun would be held on 24 March 2018 at Maryse Justin Stadium, Réduit, from 06 00 hours to 18 00 hours. Ministries/Departments, Local Authorities and private companies would participate in the event.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Ms Marie Rose de Lima Edouard, Commissioner for Youth and Sports, Library Services, Archives, Museum, Arts and Culture and Historical Sites and Buildings of Rodrigues has been co-opted on the Executive Committee of the *Comité d'Organisation des 10èmes Jeux des Iles de l'Océan Indien (COJI)*.
