

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 17 FEBRUARY 2023

1. Cabinet has taken note that on 14 February 2023, the Prime Minister of Mauritius and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had a phone conversation during which they expressed their commitment to further strengthen the excellent relations between Mauritius and the UK and looked forward to closely collaborate in tackling regional and global security challenges and in increasing trade and investment. They also reviewed the ongoing negotiations on the exercise of sovereignty over the Chagos Archipelago.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Statement of Cooperation on nuclear security matters between the Radiation Safety and Nuclear Security Authority and the United States Department of Energy/National Nuclear Security Administration/Office of Nuclear Smuggling Detection and Deterrence.

The US Agencies would assist Mauritius in developing the national capabilities of relevant institutions to deter and detect the illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive material.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the Mid-Term Review of the 10-Year SME Master Plan of the Ministry of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives. The Mid-Term Review provides an insight of the progress made since the launching of the Master Plan in March 2017. The Mid-Term Review highlights the activities where efforts must be emphasised and thus provides the Ministry with elements on which to focus for the next five years.

4. Cabinet has taken note that a team of trainers from the United Nations Institute for Training and Research and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs would be in Mauritius from 20 to 24 February 2023. The UN Resident Coordinator's Office would host a two-day capacity building workshop on 21 and 22 February 2023, in the context of the development of the new UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework for Mauritius for the period 2024 to 2028.

Another workshop would be conducted on 23 and 24 February 2023 for the academia at the University of Mauritius.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the 10th Annual Southern Africa Postal Operators Association Postal Forum Conference being held in Mauritius, from 29 to 31 March 2023, in collaboration with the Mauritius Post Ltd. The objective of the annual forum is to address challenges of the Postal Sector in the region and aims, inter alia, at -

- (a) benchmarking among postal authorities facing the same challenges;
- (b) addressing common issues for the region and identifying new areas for collaboration; and
- (c) updating on current and future trends and latest technologies in the industry across the world.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the University of Mauritius would host the African Research Universities Alliance Workshop for Centres of Excellence (ARUA) on 21 and 22 February 2023, at Réduit. The international Workshop would be organised by the ARUA, which is a network of 16 of the leading universities in Africa with the aim to enhance research and graduate training through the setting up of Centres of Excellence to be hosted by member universities.

The objective of the ARUA Workshop for Centres of Excellence is to enable the latter to work together, take stock of their achievements and plan for their sustainability. Some 40 Heads, Directors and representatives of ARUA Centres of Excellence from ARUA Universities would participate in the Workshop.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the University of Mauritius would organise the Second Edition of the Doctoral Colloquium from 08 to 09 March 2023, at Réduit, in hybrid mode, in collaboration with the University of Kwazulu Natal, South Africa.

The Doctoral Colloquium would provide an opportunity for doctoral students to present their research to a distinguished academic panel, fellow doctoral students and other researchers for constructive feedback. It would enhance the internationalisation of the Higher Education sector and would also provide an opportunity for networking in that sector.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the incident which occurred at Mare Longue on 16 February 2023, where some pilgrims returning from Ganga Talao, were injured as a result of an electric shock. Immediate medical attention was provided to them. Arrangements have been made to provide psychological support to the victims and their families.

Cabinet has also taken note that an Inter-Ministerial Committee has been set up to come up with an appropriate regulatory framework for the conduct of processions for religious purposes and pilgrimage to ensure the safety of pilgrims, participants and the public at large.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness would organise a workshop to launch the Digital National Renal Registry on 06 March 2023 to mark World Kidney Day, celebrated on 09 March. The theme for this year is “Kidney Health for All: Preparing for the Unexpected, Supporting the Vulnerable.” The campaign would focus on raising awareness about chronic kidney disease and the need, inter alia, to improve the lives of persons living with such disease.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing in Mauritius. As at 15 February 2023, there were 21 active cases of COVID-19, out of which five were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period of 09 to 15 February 2023, no death had been attributed to COVID-19.

11. Cabinet has taken note of precautionary measures and remedial actions taken by the Ministry of Health and Wellness following the detection of a few cases of Legionellosis in Mauritius.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities for World Water Day 2023, commemorated on 22 March. The theme chosen for this year is “Accelerating Change”. The Ministry in collaboration with the Central Water Authority, the Wastewater Management Authority and the Water Resources Unit, would organise a series of activities from 18 to 29 March 2023, including –

- (a) a National Seminar on “Accelerating Change” on 21 March 2023, with themes such as “Valuing water”, “Water-Energy-Food Nexus” and “Sanitation”;
- (b) Open Days, inclusive of guided tours, as well as educational tours for students of primary and secondary schools, from 18 to 21 March 2023 at La Marie Water Treatment Plant, Midlands Reservoir and Hollyrood Pumping Station;
- (c) Fresco competition open to the public from 23 to 25 March 2023 and planting of trees at La Nicolière Water Treatment Plant; and
- (d) showcase organised in collaboration with Business Mauritius of latest technology on efficient use of water for commercial and industrial purposes, for the benefit of operators in the fields of car washing, industry and transport.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Use Planning, Minister of Tourism to India, where he participated in the 30th edition of the South Asia's Travel & Tourism Exchange (SATTE). SATTE offers an international platform for tourism operators as well as public and private sector professionals from across the travel, tourism and hospitality industry to conduct business, share knowledge and exchange ideas.

In the margins of the event, the Deputy Prime Minister had meetings with Travel and Tourism Operators and representatives of Indian Airlines, among others.

The Deputy Prime Minister also met the Minister of External Affairs of India, the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs and the Union Minister of Tourism, Culture and Development of North Eastern Region to discuss bilateral issues of common interest.

14. Cabinet has taken note that Mrs Carine Charlette-Katinic, Director of the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), has been nominated as Vice-Chair of the Information Exchange Working Group (IEWG) of the Egmont Group.

The IEWG has the following objectives –

- (a) promoting, supporting and facilitating the bilateral and multilateral exchange of operational and strategic information;
- (b) jointly developing approaches and methods among FIUs to share knowledge and specific insights into global money laundering and terrorist financing threats, new typologies and best practices; and
- (c) strengthening the IT capabilities of FIUs and utilising advancements in technology to improve the collaboration and exchange of information of FIUs.

15. Cabinet has taken note that the Road Development Authority would embark on the construction of a Grade Separated Junction at Wooton Roundabout M1, which would last from 21 February 2023 to 31 March 2024. In that connection, the slip lane dedicated for traffic heading from Quartier Militaire to the South would be closed permanently as the works would be implemented thereon and on completion of the works, a new slip lane would be introduced.

The necessary traffic signs would be set up and Police assistance would be provided to inform and guide road users accordingly.
