

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 10 MAY 2024

1. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Education (Amendment) Regulations 2024. The Regulations would provide for the qualifications requirement for the recruitment of Educators in secondary schools to be aligned with the requirements of the Technology Education Stream with a view to diversifying the educational offerings at Grades 10 and 11. The new stream brought a panoply of new subjects for which new curricula had been developed. These subjects include English, French, Applied Mathematics, Applied Physical Science, Applied Life Science, Engineering Technology, Computer Technology and Innovation as well as Health and Hospitality.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Road Traffic (Bus Fares) (Amendment) Regulations 2024 with a view to, inter alia, allowing students attending Special Education Needs institutions to be eligible to a Student Identity Card for the purpose of the Free Travel Scheme in public buses and light rail.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the promulgation of the Industrial Property (Procedure of Tribunal) Regulations 2024. The Regulations aim at fulfilling the new mandate of the reconstituted Industrial Property Tribunal provided by the Industrial Property Act which had broadened the scope of protection to cover other industrial property rights such as utility models, layout-designs of integrated circuits, plant breeder's rights and geographical indications.

The Regulations would also provide for the legal remedies for any interested person feeling aggrieved by the decision of the Director to appeal against such decision or to anybody wishing to apply for the invalidation of an industrial property right to do so by lodging a case in this respect before the Tribunal, as provided by law.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Audit Office and the African Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions (English Speaking) on Co-operation in the Field of Public Sector Auditing. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding would be to strengthen, promote and develop co-operation between the two institutions in the field of public sector auditing. The areas of co-operation would include, inter alia, the following –

- (a) exchange of information, experiences and best practices on public sector auditing procedures and methodologies; and
- (b) professional training for enhancing of professional standards.

5. Cabinet had agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Office of the Electoral Commissioner and the Indian Ocean Commission for the hosting of the Secretariat of the *Réseau Electoral de l'Océan Indien* (REOI) by the Office of the Electoral Commissioner.

The REOI Secretariat would be the administrative liaison body between the Electoral Management Bodies as well as the REOI and between the latter and regional and international organisations. The role and mandate of the REOI Secretariat would be, inter alia, to -

- (a) ensure the implementation and monitoring of the action plan of the REOI;
- (b) organise monitoring and evaluation meetings with relevant stakeholders;
- (c) support in the drafting of reports, the organisation of technical and strategic meetings and any other requests necessary for the implementation of action plans; and
- (d) carry out a needs analysis, in consultation with the experts of the Indian Ocean Commission until 2025, of human resources and finance of the REOI structures in order to sustain the action of these networks.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a *Convention cadre* between the Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology and the *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie*. The *Convention cadre* aims at re-enforcing inter-university cooperation and promoting student employability and would provide, inter alia, for the following -

- (a) the setting up of an integrated space in Mauritius, the *Espace Intégré AUF-Maurice*, which includes three different structures, namely a National Office (the *Bureau National-AUF Maurice*), a digital and pedagogical space (the *Campus Numérique Francophone 5.0*) and an employment and entrepreneurship space (the *Centre d'Employabilité Francophone*);
- (b) the present *Campus Numérique Francophone*, AUF's historic installation in Mauritius, to be modernised in terms of equipment and its missions would be reviewed to better align with the needs of partner universities in the field of scientific research; and
- (c) the existing *Institut Francophone de l'Entrepreneuriat* to be absorbed by the *Centre d'Employabilité Francophone*, and to be dedicated to student entrepreneurship and employability.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change signing a Memorandum of Agreement with public and private sector stakeholders in the Refrigeration and Air Conditioning sector, in the context of the implementation of the Hydrochlorofluorocarbon (HCFC) Phase-Out Management Plan. The HCFC Phase-Out Management Plan aims at eliminating HCFCs by the year 2030 through a gradual reduction in imports and a ban on appliances containing chlorofluorocarbons.

The Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change would conduct appropriate training courses for the technicians of the recipient organisations on the use and operation of the tools and equipment.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Government of the Republic of India had favourably authorised the export of 14,000 MT of Non-Basmati White Rice to Mauritius through the National Cooperative Exports Limited.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised in the context of Africa Day which is celebrated on 25 May every year. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade would coordinate the celebratory activities, which, inter alia, include a Seminar by the University of Mauritius and Africa awareness campaigns by the Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation. The Soweto Gospel Choir would perform at the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture Trust Fund. The Africa Day celebrations would culminate with an official reception hosted by the President of the Republic of Mauritius at the State House on 25 May 2024.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the holding of a national workshop on the Application of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Agreements on Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary Measures and Technical Barriers to Trade from 15 to 17 July 2024, in Mauritius. The workshop would be organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in collaboration with the WTO. The objectives of the workshop would be to -

- (a) raise awareness of both government officials and private sector stakeholders on the requirements of the WTO, Sanitary and Phyto-Sanitary and Technical Barriers to Trade Agreements;
- (b) sensitise stakeholders on the obligations of Mauritius, as a WTO member, in the implementation of both agreements vis-a-vis its trade partners; and
- (c) equip government officials with knowledge of how to implement the agreements while ensuring inclusiveness of all stakeholders at national level.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of training courses on Virtual Assets Investigation, Open Source Intelligence and Electronic Evidence First Responder's Training from 20 to 31 May 2024, in Mauritius. The training courses would be organised within the framework of the INTERPOL Support Programme for the African Union pertaining to AFRIPOL and the GLACY-e Projects. The AFRIPOL provides a framework for Police Cooperation at the strategic, tactical and operational levels of all African States and the INTERPOL Support Programme for the African Union assists AFRIPOL in developing its capabilities through operation and investigations, criminal analysis and the exchange of information, knowledge and best practices across the Continent. The GLACY-e (Global Action on Cybercrime Enhanced) is a joint project of the European Union and the Council of Europe and concerns strengthening capacities of countries to apply legislations on cybercrime and electronic evidence.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Revenue Authority would host the -

- (a) World Customs Organization (WCO) Regional Workshop on E-Commerce for the Eastern and Southern Africa Region from 28 to 30 May 2024, with the objective of providing customs administrations with the necessary knowledge and tools to implement the WCO Framework of Standards on Cross-Border E-Commerce;
- (b) Homeland Security Investigations Regional Intellectual Property Rights Applied Trade Enforcement Workshop from 04 to 07 June 2024 to provide for the analysis of case studies, investigative methodologies and advanced tactics that police and customs officials can use to enhance the enforcement of intellectual property rights crimes; and
- (c) WCO Briefing Meeting for Operation DEMETER X from 18 to 20 June 2024 with the objective of establishing a collaborative platform that would bring together participating customs authorities and international partners to strengthen coordinated efforts in combating illegal activities related to cross-border trade of waste and substances controlled under the Montreal Protocol.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Blue Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping would, in collaboration with the International Maritime Organization, organise the GloFouling Pilot Training Course on Dry-Dock Operations for Biofouling Prevention and Management on 27 and 28 May 2024, in Mauritius.

The technical training would focus on dry-dock operations for Biofouling Prevention and Management development and comprise a site visit to the dry-dock. The training course would be attended by various participants from both the Government and private sectors and would include Government officials from various Ministries, and dry dock staff, ship operators, port operators, managing the services related Biofouling.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the First Ministerial Conference on Drug Trafficking and Substance Abuse organised by the Prime Minister's Office in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the Indian Ocean Commission, on 25 April 2024 in Mauritius. The Conference agreed on the establishment of –

- (a) a Strategic Framework for Cooperation Against Drugs Trafficking and Substance Abuse in the Western Indian Ocean;
- (b) the Western Indian Ocean Observatory on Drugs; and
- (c) the Regional Drug Secretariat and a Western Indian Ocean Network of National Agencies Leading the Drug Response.

Ministers and representatives of States and organisations participating in the Conference agreed to a Declaration for enhancing regional and international cooperation against drug trafficking and drug use in the Western Indian Ocean.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the new pathways and articulations between Technical and Vocational Education and Higher Education, the objective being to create a whole-of-skilling journey for all learners and a broader set of study and career choices, irrespective of starting point or entrance criteria, with no learner left behind.

In order to broaden the opportunities of students having opted for the technical education stream, students having completed a Diploma pitched at level 5 or level 6 on the Mauritius National Qualifications Framework would have the opportunity to pursue higher studies at undergraduate level, in line with the academic requirements of the University concerned.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority was carrying out a marketing campaign in India with a view to boosting the performance of the Indian Tourism market.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the Preparedness Plan of the Ministry of Health and Wellness against Cholera which include -

- (a) Outbreak Response, Investigation and Reporting;
- (b) Surveillance, Detection, Diagnosis and Case Management;
- (c) Infection Prevention and Control in Hospitals;
- (d) Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH);
- (e) Risk Communication and Community Engagement; and
- (f) Vaccination, Monitoring and Evaluation.

The Preparedness Plan would be disseminated to enable prompt action in case of detection of any case.

18. Cabinet has taken note that as at 09 May 2024, there were 427 active cases of Dengue Fever in Mauritius, of which 56 persons had been hospitalised in both public and private hospitals. For Rodrigues, 83 active cases of Dengue Fever had been recorded of which eight persons were hospitalised.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the findings of the latest Nutrition Survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Wellness and the Commission for Health and Others of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly in Rodrigues. The overall objective of the Survey was to study food consumption patterns pertaining to the quality and quantity of dietary intake, and to assess the nutritional status of the Rodriguan population in terms of body weight and micro-nutrient status, with a view to addressing diet and nutrition-related health problems, including non-communicable diseases on the island.

The Rodrigues Nutrition Survey 2023 gave a clearer understanding of the typical dietary practices, food choices and eating habits of the Rodriguan population and their impacts on nutrition and health.

20. Cabinet has taken note of the report of the Mauritius Meteorological Services (MMS) with regard to the seasonal outlook for Winter 2024 for Mauritius and Rodrigues. According to the MMS, observed trends of meteorological parameters in the region indicate that the onset of Winter 2024 would be during the first fortnight of May. The updated Winter 2024 Seasonal Outlook Report would be released to the general public and updated by the MMS upon the availability of fresh information.

21. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in the context of the International Day for Biological Diversity 2024 which is celebrated on 22 May every year, with a view to increasing understanding and awareness of biodiversity issues. The theme of this year's celebration is "Be part of the Plan".

The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security in collaboration with the National Parks and Conservation Service, would inaugurate, on Saturday 01 June 2024, a new pathway in the National Park at Pétrin over a distance of 600 to 800 metres for physically challenged persons. An exhibition on endemic animals would also be held along the pathway.

22. Cabinet has taken note that Airport Holdings Ltd had been recognised by the prestigious *Jeune Afrique* as the 215th most successful company out of around 1,300 companies across Africa.

23. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the National Women's Sports Commission for a period of two years, with Mrs Marie Annabelle Jennifer Lascar-José as part-time Chairperson.
