

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 09 MAY 2025**

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Prime Minister in the 5<sup>th</sup> Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Indian Ocean Commission held in Antananarivo, Madagascar on the theme “*Sécurité et souveraineté alimentaires pour le développement du marché de l’Indianocéanie*”.

The Summit provided an opportunity for Member States to discuss measures to enhance mutual collaboration and partnerships. The discussions confirmed the collective political will to promote food security, improve nutrition and facilitate the trade of agricultural and food products in accordance with existing phytosanitary requirements of each Member State. The Summit recommended the inclusion of the Regional Food Security and Nutrition Food Programme of the Indian Ocean Commission in the national policies of the Member States.

During his intervention at the Opening Ceremony, the Prime Minister laid emphasis on the urgency for Member States to forge stronger relationships so as to collectively deal with the adverse impacts of changes in the geopolitical and international trade landscapes. He underscored the necessity for countries to enhance resilience by accelerating regional integration across all sectors. He called for all Member States to join forces to create an innovative blue economy that generates growth and employment while respecting the ecosystems. The Prime Minister also underlined the intricate link between marine resources and the importance for maintaining maritime security.

Thematic Round Tables were held during the Summit, allowing focused discussions between Member States and stakeholders. During the Round Table on food security, connectivity and intra-regional exchanges, the Prime Minister called for bolder actions to fully leverage on the significant marine resources of the Indian Ocean without, however, compromising its long-term sustainability.

In the margins of the Summit, the Prime Minister had a one-on-one meeting with the President of France and discussed several issues of mutual interest, including the issue of Tromelin, which had been dormant since October 2014, closer cooperation in economic and cultural fields, as well as our continued engagement at the regional and international levels.

A Restitution Ceremony was held on 24 April 2025 in the margins of the Indian Ocean Commission Summit where the Prime Minister symbolically remitted to the President of Madagascar 45 gold ingots which had been seized in Mauritius in January 2019. Prior to the Restitution Ceremony, the Prime Minister had a *tête-à-tête* with the President of Madagascar and discussed issues of bilateral interest.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that following the Municipal City Council and Municipal Town Council Elections 2025, the Swearing in Ceremony and Election of the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor, the Mayors and the Deputy Mayors would be held as follows -

- (a) Municipal City Council of Port Louis on Wednesday 14 May 2025;
- (b) Municipal Council of Quatre Bornes on Wednesday 14 May 2025;
- (c) Municipal Council of Beau Bassin/Rose-Hill on Thursday 15 May 2025;
- (d) Municipal Council of Vacoas-Phoenix on Thursday 15 May 2025; and
- (e) Municipal Council of Curepipe on Thursday 15 May 2025.

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3. Cabinet has taken note that the water level in the reservoirs had reached 72.7% of their capacity. The Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities would lift certain restrictions on the use of water from the Central Water Authority network for “non-essential” activities. Accordingly, the Central Water Authority (Dry Season) Regulations 2025 would be amended to allow washing of vehicles by using a hosepipe, sprinkler or pressure washer, as from Saturday 10 May 2025.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to drafting instructions being conveyed to the Attorney-General’s Office for a new Sports Bill, with a view to addressing certain weaknesses in the present Sports Act, namely -

- (a) the present legislation did not adequately safeguard individuals participating in sports activities from any form of harm, abuse, neglect, and exploitation;
- (b) there was need for an appropriate framework for sport coaching in order to ensure that coaches possess the required skills to coach and have opportunities to access further professional development;
- (c) the present legislation did not allow the Ministry of Youth and Sports or the National Sports Federations to have a proper oversight over the quality of coaching being delivered in private sports academies;
- (d) there was a growing concern pertaining to National Sport Federations which, though registered with the Registrar of Associations, had not demonstrated active engagement with their members;
- (e) the present legislation did not allow some sports organisations to operate as National Sports Federation, despite having a larger number of licensees and recording notable performances at the international level;

- (f) most of the National Sports Federations did not have defined criteria in their rules pertaining to affiliation of sports clubs;
- (g) there was no appropriate structure to promote regionalisation;
- (h) the specific needs of Rodrigues were not adequately addressed in the present legislation, which impeded the development of sports on the island;
- (i) the lack of a prompt conflict resolution mechanism, particularly within National Sports Federations; and
- (j) there was a need to align the provisions of the Sports Act with the rules of international sports federations.

The Ministry of Youth and Sports had invited the public to submit their views on a new Sports Bill and suggestions received would be considered.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of Eid-UI-Adha festival, the retail selling price of imported live cattle had been fixed at Rs174 per kilo, with effect from 03 May 2025 and would lapse two days after the festival. The Consumer Protection (Control of Sale of Imported Live Animals for Home Slaughter) (Amendment) Regulations 2025 was gazetted on 02 May 2025.

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6. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of a revised protocol on the movement of livestock from Rodrigues to Mauritius. The revised protocol would, amongst others, allow -

- (a) farmers to move cattle from Rodrigues directly to their farms in Mauritius; and
- (b) movement of pregnant cattle, goat and sheep for breeding and fattening.

Furthermore, no isolation of animals would be required as only animals tested negative from Foot and Mouth Disease would be imported. Moreover, biosecurity requirements, monitoring and enforcement mechanisms would be enhanced while traceability of consignments would be enforced to safeguard both animal and public health.

The animals would have to be brought to the Mauritius Meat Authority, the only licensed slaughterhouse in Mauritius. For the upcoming Eid-UI-Adha festival, individuals would be allowed to import animals for slaughtering at private premises, in accordance with the National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office Act.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that, in the context of the forthcoming Eid-UI-Adha festival, the Ministry of Land Transport would issue a communiqué with a view to drawing the attention of owners of goods vehicles (lorries) to the conditions attached to the Carrier licences in order to ensure all road safety precautions.

Owners of goods vehicles involved in the transport of live cattle would be urged to comply with the conditions of the licence issued to them. Any breach of conditions could entail prosecution before a court of law or disciplinary proceedings by the National Land Transport Authority for the suspension or revocation of their Carrier licence.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the elaboration of a comprehensive Strategy Report on The Future of the Financial Services Sector 2025-2030 themed “Rethinking the Future of the Financial Services Industry in Mauritius.” Following a high-level consultative workshop, the Strategy Report was elaborated with the aim of designing a new economic model for the Financial Services Sector to ensure that it sustains the manifold challenges, both locally and internationally.

The Report covered the new trends in the financial services landscape laying much importance on Fintech and Sustainable Finance. The Strategy Report was in line with the Government Programme 2025-2029 and reaffirmed the commitment of Mauritius to drive sustainable growth, innovation, and resilience in its Financial Services Sector. The Strategy Report was structured around three main parts, namely -

- (a) situational analysis of the Financial Services Sector providing a comprehensive and data-driven overview of the sector’s performance over the last decade;
- (b) key challenges facing the Sector which captures the critical constraints and bottlenecks impacting the sector’s growth. These were openly discussed and documented during the Consultative Workshop; and
- (c) strategic pillars and policy directions which set out a clear strategic direction for the Mauritius International Financial Centre by -
  - (i) enhancing the ease and reducing the cost of doing business through regulatory streamlining, e-KYC, and turnaround benchmarks;
  - (ii) diversifying and modernising financial products, including fintech, sustainable finance, wealth management, family office and capital markets;
  - (iii) rebranding the Mauritius International Financial Centre with a coherent national promotion strategy;
  - (iv) strengthening international market presence, the Mauritius International Financial Centre brand visibility and attractiveness, particularly in Africa and Asia;

- (v) addressing human capital gaps by aligning training, improving incentives, and engaging diaspora talent; and
- (vi) upgrading infrastructure and institutional readiness for an agile and digitally-enabled Mauritius International Financial Centre.

The Ministry of Financial Services and Economic Planning would implement a structured multi-stakeholder mechanism to ensure continuous dialogue with industry representatives, regular monitoring of reform and transparent reporting on progress.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised in the context of the 8<sup>th</sup> UN Global Road Safety Week from 12 to 16 May 2025 under the theme “Make Walking and Cycling Safe”. The Ministry of Land Transport would organise the following activities to mark the event -

- (a) a wreath-laying ceremony at the stele erected at Gandhi Square, Rose Belle to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> year of one of the major and tragic road accidents which occurred in Mauritius on 12 May 1975;
- (b) a pacific road safety march, in collaboration with the Rotary Club of Rose Belle, from Plaisance Mall to Gandhi Square, Rose Belle;
- (c) activities at Seegoolam Torul Government School, namely a demonstration on the use of a mobile traffic playground, with particular emphasis on safe walking and safe cycling and a quiz competition on road safety for the school children;
- (d) awareness session at Sookdeo Bissoondoyal State College, namely a sensitisation session on “Youth Advocacy and Road Safety” with a view to raising awareness on the adoption of appropriate behaviours as road users;
- (e) broadcasting of the message of the Minister of Land Transport on MBC TV on the theme “Make Walking and Cycling Safe”; and
- (f) an awareness programme by the Academy for Integrated & Sustainable Development.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius joining the Republic of India as a co-host, in its bid to be the host country for the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development Conference in 2027, which would aim at addressing critical issues such as climate change, food security and sustainable management of biodiversity.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Second Session of the *Commission Mixte Maurice – Réunion* held on 25 April 2025 in Mauritius. The *Commission Mixte* was centred around three fundamental pillars, namely *valorisation et développement des territoires, résilience et complémentarité* and *un avenir en commun*.

Key issues addressed during the *Commission Mixte* ranged from culture, tourism, biodiversity, circular economy, solid waste management and transition to green energy. Several Memoranda of Understanding on cooperation were signed as a result of those discussions.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the organisation of a Diaspora Initiatives Stocktaking Workshop by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in collaboration with the International Organisation for Migration on 14 and 15 May 2025 in Mauritius.

The workshop would serve as a forum to refine the Diaspora Engagement Action Plan, bridging gaps and sharing insights, to leverage diaspora contribution towards sustainable development. The main objectives of the workshop would be to -

- (a) identify the key challenges and issues related to diaspora engagement;
- (b) assess the National Diaspora Engagement Action Plan; and
- (c) harmonise Government's actions to facilitate effective and efficient engagement with the Mauritian diaspora.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the First Mauritius European Union (EU) Partnership Dialogue, co-chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade and the Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Mauritius held on 10 April 2025. Seven Ambassadors of EU Member States, two other Heads of Delegation from EU Member States, their respective delegations, as well as Supervising Officers and Senior Officials from 13 participating Ministries participated in the Dialogue.

The Minister held bilateral exchanges with the Ambassadors of Portugal, Sweden and Ireland in the margins of the Dialogue to reaffirm mutual commitment to strengthen bilateral ties between Mauritius and those countries and to exchange views on avenues for enhanced cooperation.

A Joint Press Release was issued to publicly convey the main outcomes of the Dialogue, which reflected the spirit of mutual engagement, highlighted shared priorities, and served as a summary of the constructive exchanges.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that a training on “Cyber Disaster Response: Development of Simulation Exercises” was held from 05 to 09 May 2025. The training was organised by the Computer Emergency Response Team of Mauritius in collaboration with the International Telecommunication Union as part of the European Union funded Capacity Development for Digital Transformation project.

The five-day training course looked into the key elements required to develop cyber disaster response simulation exercises. The course also provided a comprehensive understanding of cyber-attacks and the protection of critical information infrastructures. Several local and international participants from 15 countries attended the training programme.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that the International Day of Families would be commemorated on 15 May 2025 on the theme “*Fami: nou rasinn, nou lafors, nou lavenir*”. A media campaign would be launched on 15 May 2025 to showcase the importance of the family and spending quality time together. The campaign would culminate in the celebration of a “Family Fun Day” at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanic Garden, Pamplemousses on Sunday 01 June 2025.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Housing and Lands in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Urban Days held in Paris, France.

The Minister had participated as a speaker during the kick-off which had set the stage for subsequent sessions covering key issues such as circular economy in cities, sustainable urban development, housing reforms and age-friendly urban planning. In his address, the Minister underscored the acute vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States, the devastating impact of Cyclone *Chido* in Agalega, the urgent need for resilient, eco-friendly infrastructure and enhanced disaster preparedness in vulnerable regions and the efficient land administration and strategic land use planning to optimise use of limited resources for small nations, such as Mauritius.

Mauritius had been identified as one of the five African countries (alongside Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Kenya and Rwanda) eligible to participate in a landmark OECD initiative which would focus on -

- (a) unlocking the potential of smart cities;
- (b) promoting sustainable building practices; and
- (c) enhancing smart land management, including the use of land value capture and digital tools.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Tourism in the Roadshows organised by the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority in the South African cities of Durban, Johannesburg and Cape Town. The main objective of the Roadshow was to reconnect with the South African travel agents and engage with the latter to promote Mauritius as a tourist destination. It also served as an opportunity to identify the various challenges being faced in that market and to come up with joint actions to boost arrivals from South Africa.

The Minister had meetings with major travel tours and agents at the Roadshows. He also met the Director, Africa Unit of Western Cape Tourism Trade and Investment Promotion Agency, the official tourism, trade, and investment promotion agency for Cape Town and the Western Cape, with a view to strengthening relations with the Western Cape.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to Ankara, Türkiye to explore possibilities of collaboration in the field of energy. The Minister had meetings with the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye and the Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructure. The Minister provided an overview of the energy sector of Mauritius and the critical energy challenges being faced, notably in terms of demand-side management following substantial increase in peak demand and the looming shortage of power supply.

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19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Education and Human Resource in the Cambridge Annual Assessment Review Meeting. The main objectives of the meeting were to review the collaboration between the Mauritius Examinations Syndicate and the Cambridge International Education, particularly on policy, operational and assessment matters and to plan the future and bring improvements, where appropriate. During the meeting, the following priority issues were raised, with a focus on -

- (a) collaboration with Cambridge in the context of the development of local qualifications at upper secondary levels for *Kreol Morisien*;
- (b) developing syllabus at 'O' level for Indian Music and Dance, and Bhojpuri;
- (c) offering an alternative pathway – the SC Technical – for our learners of 15 to 16 years old;
- (d) broadening the HSC Professional qualification; and
- (e) discussing the provision of the final list of awardees for the national laureateship scheme by Cambridge.

The Minister had meetings with, inter alia, the Pro-Vice Chancellor, Growth and Development and other officers of the University of Cumbria and the Chief Executive Officer of Stephen Austin Ltd.

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20. Cabinet has taken note that, in accordance with section 87 of the Constitution, the Prime Minister had advised the President of the Republic of Mauritius that Mr Gaetan Michel Siew Hew Sam, GOSK be appointed as Ambassador of Mauritius to the People's Republic of China with residence in Beijing.

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21. Cabinet has taken note -

- (a) of the appointment of Mr Akeesh Sharma Caussy as Ombudsperson for Sports;
- (b) that the Tourism Authority Board would appoint Mr Louis Sylvain Méyépa as Director of the Tourism Authority;
- (c) that the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority Board would appoint Mr Avinash Kanti Teelock as Director of the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority;
- (d) of the composition of the Medical Council of Mauritius for the period May 2025 to April 2028;
- (e) of the reconstitution of the National Solidarity Fund Board, with Mrs Poonawadee Iyasawmy-Essoo as part-time Chairperson;
- (f) of the reconstitution of the National Road Safety Council, with Mr Zeeshan Haider Rajani as part-time Chairperson;
- (g) of the reconstitution of the Board of the Mauritius Qualifications Authority, with Mr Vijay Sookharee as part-time Chairperson; and
- (h) of the reconstitution of the Private Secondary Education Board, with Mr Deenesh Patpur as part-time Chairperson.

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