

## CABINET DECISIONS – 11 OCTOBER 2013

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of Dr the Hon N. Ramgoolam, Prime Minister, to New York, where he participated in the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly, the Clinton Global Initiative and the Socialist International Presidium.

The Prime Minister was accompanied, amongst others, by Dr the Hon A. Boolell, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, HE Ambassador J. N. Meetarbhan, Permanent Representative of Mauritius to the UN and the Secretary to Cabinet and Head of the Civil Service.

The theme of this year's General Debate of the General Assembly was *The Post-2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage*.

In his address to the General Assembly, the Prime Minister –

- (a) expressed the unreserved condemnation of Mauritius of the act of terrorism perpetrated in Kenya, which compelled the revisiting of regional and global response to national and international security threats;
- (b) pointed out that the Post - 2015 Development Agenda should be guided by the vision of eradicating extreme poverty, empowering more women, providing wider opportunities to young people for education and jobs, improving health care, as well as the supply of water and food;
- (c) impressed on the fact that climate change should be one of the top priorities for the Global Agenda as no country, still less the Small Islands Developing States (SIDS), is safe from natural disasters and the damaging effects of climate change;
- (d) urged that the post-2015 Development Agenda should include a road map for an interconnected world economic system, bearing in mind the specifications of some countries and regions;
- (e) underlined the need for the United Nations to take the lead in formulating a global vision for the oceans and announced that Mauritius has already launched a national dialogue on the promotion of the ocean economy as one of the main pillars of development;
- (f) stressed on the fact that the detachment of a part of the Mauritian territory - the Chagos Archipelago - prior to independence by the UK was in clear breach of International law and that the UK has shown no inclination to engage in any process that would lead to a settlement;
- (g) pointed out that, in regard to Tromelin, Mauritius and France have concluded a Framework Agreement on the co-management of the island, pending a final resolution of this issue;
- (h) upheld the peaceful restoration of democracy in Egypt and, at the same time, drew the attention of the International Community that it cannot condone the removal by force, from office and the detention of a democratically-elected leader; and
- (i) expressed our solidarity with the Palestine National Authority for the rightful aspiration to be recognized as a full UN Member State.

In the margins of the General Assembly, the Prime Minister had a bilateral meeting with the Hon Dato' Sri Mohd Bin Tun Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malaysia, with whom he discussed about the possibilities to concluding a cooperation agreement with the Malaysia Industry Government Group for High Technology which is driving the economic transformation of Malaysia.

He also had a brief meeting with Dr Manmohan Singh, Prime Minister of India, on bilateral issues, and exchanged views on matters of mutual interest with Mr Laurent Fabius, Foreign Minister of France.

The Prime Minister paid a visit to the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the UN to sign the book of condolences opened for victims of the Westgate Mall attack in Kenya on 21 September 2013.

The Prime Minister also attended the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Clinton Global Initiative on the major theme: "*Mobilizing for Impact*". He was invited for the 9<sup>th</sup> time to the distinguished gathering of over 1,000 leaders from across sectors, comprising essentially a very select group of current Heads of State and Government, business magnates, eminent academicians and key NGO representatives. The main objective of the Conference was to identify immediate and pragmatic solutions to address the world's most pressing problems. Amongst the various special sessions, the Prime Minister attended, were "*The Conversation between President Barack Obama and President Bill Clinton*" and "*Mobilizing Youth Around the World*".

The Prime Minister also attended a meeting of the Presidium of the International Socialist held in the margins of the UN General Assembly. The theme of the meeting was: "*The Struggles to gain new democracies in the world and related developments in the pursuit of freedoms, rights, peace and security-affirming the social democratic view at a critical international juncture*". In his statement, the Prime Minister commented, amongst others, on the situation in Syria and Egypt, highlighting the need for respect of international law in dealing with the issue of chemical weapons in Syria and respect for democratic process in Egypt, and the statement of Brazilian President Dilma Rousseff before the General Assembly on spying activities being carried out against sovereign States in the conduct of their domestic and international communications.

On his way back, the Prime Minister had meetings in London on how to restructure our institutions following the report of the Serious Fraud Office on the Ponzi schemes and attempts to defraud the Mauritius Revenue Authority as far as serious fraud is concerned.

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2. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Republic of Gabon, at the head of a delegation, would be on a State Visit from 16 to 19 October 2013. During his visit, the President would, amongst others, lay a wreath at the Samadhi of SSR and have a meeting with the private sector. The following agreements would also be signed -

- (a) General Agreement providing for cooperation on a wide range of fields, including trade and investment, Information and Communication Technologies, research, tourism and agriculture;
- (b) Memorandum of Understanding outlining the mechanism for having regular diplomatic consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of both countries to further develop and strengthen existing bilateral relations;

- (c) Memorandum of Understanding providing for cooperation for agro-industrial development in each country in terms of processing and value-addition of certain agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, spices, coffee, cocoa, sugar cane and its by-products, and livestock; and
- (d) Memorandum of Understanding in the field of tourism to provide for the development of common projects aiming at promoting international tourism, and tourism between both countries through the organisation of promotional campaigns, participation in tourism fairs and forums.

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3. In line with the vision of the Prime Minister, Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a National Cancer Agency under the Trust Fund for Specialised Medical Care. The Agency would, amongst others, -

- (a) undertake to carry out a situational analysis on cancer care in Mauritius and formulate a road map of cancer care, bearing in mind the specificities of Mauritius;
- (b) be responsible for sensitization campaigns, provide information on cancer to all stakeholders and maintain the Cancer Registry; and
- (c) set up national guidelines and protocols based on best international practices, provide individual plan for the management of cancer, and advise on the use of new agents and devices in cancer.

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4. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius has won 2 Gold and 2 Silver medals during the World Kickboxing Championships 2013 held in Brazil, i.e., 4 out of the 5 athletes who participated won a medal. The Championships is a biennial event organized by the World Association of Kickboxing Organisations (WAKO). The *Fédération Mauricienne de Kickboxing et Discipline Assimilée*, body responsible for the promotion and development of kickboxing and related disciplines such as Muai Thai, Full Contact, Low Kick, Light Kick and Tatami sports at national level, is affiliated to the WAKO since 1988.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that Help Age International, an International NGO recognized by the United Nations, has, on 1 October 2013 in the context of the International Day of the Elderly, launched the Global AgeWatch Index. The Help Age International that has more than 100 Affiliates from some 70 countries and about 200 partners across all continents, helps elderly persons at regional and global level to claim their rights, challenge discrimination and overcome poverty so that they can lead dignified, secure, active and healthy lives. In the Global AgeWatch Index 2013, Mauritius ranked 33<sup>rd</sup> out of the 91 countries with the first 30 countries comprising mostly developed ones and came up in the first position among the African countries. Sweden has been ranked first on the Index followed by Norway and Germany. Moreover, Mauritius is the top African country that has a universal non-contributory pension since 1958.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken to streamline procedures for the temporary registration of foreign medical practitioners with the Medical Council of Mauritius to practise in the private sector. Work permits would be issued by the Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment, subject to the visiting medical practitioner registering himself/herself with the Medical Council of Mauritius prior to undertaking any professional activities.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that Hon Shri Muniyappa, Indian Minister of State for Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, would visit Mauritius from 27 to 29 October 2013. During the visit, the Minister would, amongst others, sign a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of promotion and development of small and medium enterprises.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that 71,951 tourists visited Mauritius in the month of September 2013 as compared to 66,369 in September 2012, i.e., an increase of 8.4%. Arrivals for the period January to September 2013 were 694,443 as compared to 675,584 for the same period in 2012, i.e., an increase of 2.8%.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life and the Republic of Mozambique would sign a Memorandum of Understanding on collaboration in Health and Medicine. The main objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to enhance mutual collaboration in the health sector through the exchange of health and medical experts, and the recruitment of Mauritian doctors and nurses through a Labour Migration Programme to palliate shortage of qualified professionals in Mozambique.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of activities that would be organized by the Ministry of Arts and Culture and the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund to commemorate the 179<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Arrival of Indentured Labourers in Mauritius on Saturday 02 November 2013, namely wreath-laying, and an exhibition on Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site comprising unpublished photographs and latest research results on the Aapravasi Ghat since its inscription on the World Heritage List in 2006.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Ministry of Arts and Culture to celebrate Divali at national level. The Ministry of Arts and Culture, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism and Leisure and the Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority, would organize a Family Concert Divali Nite on Saturday 9 November 2013 at Anjalay Stadium, Belle Vue, when several top artists from Bollywood would perform. Divali would also be celebrated at regional levels; the Mahatma Gandhi Institute would organize an inter-cultural dance ballet on Ramayana and the Municipal Town Council of Vacoas/Phoenix would organize a cultural programme with local and foreign artists.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the 11<sup>th</sup> Forum of Commonwealth Heads of African Public Service would be held in Mauritius in July 2014. The Forum, an annual event, brings together Heads of Public Service in Commonwealth Africa to dialogue, network and share best practices on contemporary issues in public sector management and service delivery. The theme of the Forum would be *E-Government for inclusive and Sustainable Development*. The recommendations of the Forum would guide Member States in instituting measures to strengthen sustainable development in public sector management and service delivery through the use of technology. Some 40 senior public officials, including about 20 African Heads of Civil Service, would attend the Forum.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology, in collaboration with Extensia Ltd, would organize the annual ICT/BPO International Conference, the ICT Excellence Award 2013, and the Youth Engagement Summit (YES Africa) in December 2013. Some 200 international policy makers, distinguished leaders and CEOs, and world class global organizations in the ICT sector would participate in YES Africa. The event would be an opportunity for Mauritius to showcase on what it can offer in the field of ICT, and provide a platform to local ICT companies to display and demonstrate their product, get visibility, and network with the regional and international ICT community. It would also help reinforce the position of Mauritius as a leading regional hub.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the School Calendar for primary and secondary education levels for the Academic Year 2014, which is as follows –

|                      | <b><u>Primary</u></b>                 | <b><u>Secondary</u></b>               |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> Term | Monday 13 January to Friday 4 April   | Monday 13 January to Friday 4 April   |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> Term | Monday 21 April to Friday 18 July     | Monday 21 April to Friday 18 July     |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> Term | Monday 18 August to Friday 7 November | Monday 11 August to Friday 31 October |

Admission of students to Standard 1 and Form 1 would be held on Friday 10 January 2014.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the status of the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme in Mauritius, which aims at reducing poverty in slums through a participatory approach. Phase I of the Programme was undertaken in Port Louis, Beau-Bassin, Rose-Hill and the Black River District. Phase Two of the Programme, which comprises planning for the pilot project on slum upgrading at Karo Kalyptus, Barkly and Cité EDC Rivière Noire, would start shortly.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources to the United Kingdom, France and Finland. The main objectives of the mission were to:

- (a) explore possibilities of the Essa Academy in the United Kingdom assisting the Ministry of Education and Human Resources in the piloting of a project to improve the performance of ZEP schools;
- (b) hold discussions at the “*Institut de Maintenance Aéronautique*” in Bordeaux regarding a proposal for the setting up of an aeronautical training centre in Mauritius; and
- (c) gain a deeper understanding of the Finnish Education system and factors contributing to its global success and identify potential areas of collaboration.

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