

CABINET DECISIONS – 20 SEPTEMBER 2013

1. Cabinet has taken note that the High Powered Committee has reviewed the implementation of some of the recommendations of the Truth and Justice Commission and agreed to the early implementation of the following recommendations: the setting up of the Museum of Slavery, the heritage trail which would encompass Bassin-des-Esclaves and other culturally significant sites in Pamplemousses where slaves were, *inter alia*, traded, freed or hanged and buried; a permanent exhibition on Trou Chenille at Le Morne, and the operationalization of the National Genealogy Centre.

~~~

2. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the Minister of Tertiary Education, Science, Research and Technology to nominate young researchers to attend the Lindau Nobel Laureates' Meetings on medicine and economic sciences scheduled to be held in 2014. The Lindau Nobel Laureates' Meeting, which dates back to 1951, aims at bringing together more than 500 young scientists from all over the world to meet and interact with 20 to 35 Nobel Prize winners. The meetings are inspired by the guiding principles "**Educate. Inspire. Connect.**" Last year, two Mauritian students attended the Meeting on the theme "Chemistry".

~~~

3. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the first meeting of the Political Consultation Mechanism held during the recent official visit of HE Mr Zhang Ming, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China, to Mauritius. The Political Consultation Mechanism, established under a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2005, is a platform for high-level dialogue between the respective Ministry of Foreign Affairs with a view to enhancing understanding on issues of common interest and further consolidating bilateral relations. The following issues were discussed at the Meeting: bilateral cooperation; allocation of land in Beijing for the construction of a Mauritius Chancery; setting up of a regional airline; China-Africa relations; Climate Change and Cooperation in the field of Renewable Energy; Post-2015 Framework; SIDS-related issues; Jinfei Economic and Trade Cooperation Zone and political situation in the countries in the region, namely Madagascar.

Cabinet has also taken note that after the Political Consultation Mechanism Meeting, HE Mr Zhang Ming, Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs and Dr the Hon A. Boolell, GOSK, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, signed an Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption between Mauritius and the People's Republic of China.

~~~

4. Cabinet has agreed to the Environment Protection Act being amended to, amongst others, -

- (a) foster sustainable development in the country in line with Government's vision and commitment towards a "Maurice Ile Durable";
- (b) strengthen the enforcement and compliance mechanisms;

- (c) make better provisions for the protection and conservation of environmentally sensitive areas, such as wetlands and steep slopes; and
- (d) review the contents of EIA reports for demarcating mandatory from non-mandatory requirements on the basis of scope, nature, location of proposed projects and activities, to be in line with business facilitation.

~~~

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security would promulgate the National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office (Amendment of Schedule) Regulations, and the National Agricultural Products Regulations to further consolidate existing regulations and enable the National Agricultural Products Regulatory Office to better control and regulate the production and sale of green leaves produced by tea cultivators and métayers, and of leaf tobacco.

~~~

6. Cabinet has taken note of progress achieved in the implementation of the Protected Area Network Project, which aims at conserving the globally significant native forest biodiversity, and expanding the coverage and strengthening the effective management of the protected area network of Mauritius. The Protected Area Network, currently, covers 8,027 hectares of state terrestrial forest lands, as well as offshore islets. Under the Project, the total protected area network would be increased to 14,920 hectares in the next five years. The Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security is, amongst others, -

- (a) preparing a National Protected Area Network Expansion Strategy;
- (b) developing an Integrated Management Plan for the Black River Gorges and Bras d'Eau National Parks;
- (c) developing and testing cost-effective measures and techniques to control invasive species and restore the ecosystem; and
- (d) introducing an information management system for recording, exchanging and disseminating information.

It is expected that, at the end of the project, more than 400 ha of degraded forests would be cleared of invasive species and restored with native species.

~~~

7. Cabinet has taken note that, at the Seventh Jeux de la Francophonie held in Nice, France, Mauritius won 4 Bronze Medals, namely in Decathlon, 200 metres, Javelin and wrestling in the category of 63 kgs.

During his stay, the Minister of Youth and Sports met the President and the Administrator of A.S. Monaco Football Club on the organisation of a friendly match with our national team and had discussions with the Minister of Youth and Sports of the Seychelles, the Minister of Youth and Sports of Djibouti and representatives of the Comoros on the programme of the 2014 *Commission de la Jeunesse et des Sports de l'Océan Indien*.

~~~

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, and Attorney General to London where he participated in the Meeting of Law Ministers and Attorneys General of Small Commonwealth Jurisdictions. Legal issues of special interest to Small Commonwealth Jurisdictions, including violence against women; mainstreaming climate change in national legislation; law of the sea issues; protection of witnesses of serious criminal offences, were discussed at the Meeting. Papers on “*Internet and Social Networks: Freedom of Expression in the Digital Age*”, and “*e-Judiciary and Use of Technology in Court in Small Commonwealth Jurisdictions*” were also considered. The Institute of Judicial and Legal Studies of Mauritius presented a paper on “*Continuing Judicial and Legal Education of Law Practitioners - Opportunities for Collaboration*”.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security, and Attorney General had discussions with Dr B. Fogle, Veterinarian at the Portman Veterinary Clinic, on the workshop on ‘*Recent Advances in Animal Treatment*’ that would be organised in Mauritius in early November this year.

~~~

9. Cabinet has taken note of the Health Statistics Report 2012 on the Island of Mauritius and the Island of Rodrigues. The salient features of the Report are as follows -

ISLAND OF MAURITIUS

- (a) a total of 13,766 live births were registered in 2012 for a Crude Birth Rate of 11.0 per 1000 mid-year resident population as compared to 11.2 in 2011 and 16.9 in 2000;
- (b) the total fertility rate, which had dropped from 6.1 births per woman in reproductive ages in 1963 to 2.6 in 2000, stood at 1.4 in 2012;
- (c) a total of 9,103 deaths were registered in 2012 for a Crude Death Rate of 7.3 per 1,000 mid-year population as compared to 7.0 in 2005;
- (d) the Infant Mortality Rate, which was 12.6 per 1,000 live births in 2011, has increased to 13.4 in 2012;
- (e) the Stillbirth Rate has decreased from 9.6 per 1,000 births in 2011 to 9.5 in 2012; and
- (f) the number of in-patients in Government Hospitals in 2012 was 204,736 compared to 205,156 in 2011 and the number of operations performed was 40,451 and 40,699 respectively.

ISLAND OF RODRIGUES

- (a) 728 live births were registered in 2012 for a Crude Birth Rate of 19.1 per 1,000 mid-year resident population as compared to 24.3 in 2005;
- (b) a total of 240 deaths were registered in 2012 for a Crude Death Rate of 6.3 per 1,000 mid-year population as compared to 5.8 in 2011; and
- (c) the Infant Mortality Rate has increased from 17.2 per 1,000 live births in 2011 to 20.6 in 2012.

~~~

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Housing and Lands to Rwanda where he participated in the Second International Tripartite Conference of the African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Secretariat, the European Commission and the UN-Habitat. The theme of the Conference was “**Sustainable Urbanisation for Poverty Eradication**”. The main objectives of the Conference were to harmonize the concerted efforts of the African Caribbean and Pacific countries towards the Post-2015 Development Agenda and take stock of the achievements of the Millennium Development Goal 7 on improving the living conditions of slum dwellers ahead of the third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development-Habitat III scheduled for 2016.

~~~

11. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives to India where he signed two Memoranda of Understanding in the field of promotion and development of small and medium enterprises, with the Entrepreneurship Development Institute of India and the National Small Industries Corporation of India. He also had several meetings with senior officials of cooperative development institutions, namely the National Cooperative Union of India, the National Cooperative Development Cooperation, the Fisheries Federation, the National Dairy Development Board. The Minister also had discussions on bilateral cooperation with Shri K.H. Muniyappa, Minister of State for micro, small and medium enterprises and Shri Saurabh Patel, Minister for Energy, Cottage Industries and Tourism of the Government of Gujarat.

~~~

12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to Zambia where she participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting of COMESA Ministers responsible for Gender and Women’s Affairs. The objects of the Meeting were to review progress made since the last Ministers’ Meeting, consider the recommendations in the Report of the 9th Technical Committee and adopt the Report.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister had discussions with Mrs K. Ichoya, CEO of Federation of National Associations of Women in Business, on the role and objectives of the National Women Entrepreneur Council.