

**CABINET DECISIONS – 25 SEPTEMBER 2015**

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministerial Committee, set up under the chairmanship of the Acting Prime Minister to reconsider the recommendations contained in the Report of the Truth and Justice Commission, has taken cognizance of the Interim Report on the cases of land dispossession mentioned in the Report of the Truth and Justice Commission. There are sufficient evidence of land dispossession in 42 out of the 224 cases, i.e., 27 in Mauritius and 15 in Rodrigues. There are 87 cases which should be followed. In 91 cases, there is no evidence of land dispossession. The Committee has made the following recommendations –

- (a) a Land Research and Mediation Unit, headed by Mr Mahmad Rehan Mandary, PDSM, as opposed to the former Land Research and Mediation Commission, would be set up to continue research on the cases that have not been investigated by the Truth and Justice Commission. The Unit will comprise a retired officer from the Registrar General's Office, an Attorney and a Surveyor from the Ministry of Housing and Lands;
- (b) the Interim Report has been forwarded to the Attorney General's Office for advice on the way forward; and
- (c) the Ministry of Arts and Culture would identify land either in Port Louis or Le Morne to construct a Slave Museum, and start acquiring exhibits to be displayed therein.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to existing legislation being reinforced to provide for harsher penalties for offences in case of reckless and dangerous driving, drink driving, fatal accidents involving hit and run, and unauthorized competition or trial of speed involving the use of motor vehicles on a road. The Police will enforce existing Road Traffic Regulations with "zero tolerance" with a view to curtailing the occurrence of tragic road accidents.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the new Invest Hotel Scheme to assist hotels in reducing their debt burden, and restructuring and financing major refurbishment and renovation works. The Scheme will bring in additional Foreign Direct Investment and apply to existing hotels.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius contributing an amount of USD 100,000 to the Commonwealth of Dominica for its reconstruction following devastation caused by the passage of a tropical storm in August last.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that, on the occasion of the commemoration of the 300th Anniversary of the arrival of French in Mauritius, the Mauritius Posts Ltd and La Poste (France) would launch the joint issue of new stamps. The stamps illustrate the ship “Le Chasseur” under the command of Guillaume Dufrense d’Arsel entering the Baie des Moluques, now the Port Louis Harbour, to take possession of the island in 1715.

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of an ICT Incubator/Accelerator known as “*La Plage Incubator/Accelerator*” at Cyber Tower II, Ebène Cyber City. The Incubator/Accelerator aims at creating a conducive ecosystem for high-tech and innovative entrepreneurship based on a one-stop-shop approach to enable potential entrepreneurs to concentrate on the development of ideas/projects in order to transform them into profitable businesses. It is proposed to accommodate some 60 positions with 15 “accelerates” and 45 “incubates” in the first year of operation with the objective of attaining 45 “accelerates” and 15 “incubates” in the third year.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would set up Social Action Committees at the level of Women Centres to forge strategic alliances with key partners working in the vicinity of Women Centres for the improvement of livelihoods. The Committees would, among others, -

- (a) build solidarity of women and communities at grassroot level by undertaking collective action for their advancement;
- (b) apply a gender perspective within the respective mandates of partners and delivery of services;
- (c) set up self-help groups to assist vulnerable women and communities experiencing distress; and
- (d) inculcate positive attitude and create better living conditions among women and communities.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade signing a Memorandum of Understanding on the establishment of a Bilateral Consultation Mechanism with the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Philippines. The Bilateral Consultation Mechanism would enable the exchange of views between Mauritius and the Philippines on matters of bilateral interest, as well as on issues of a multilateral nature, as required. Consultations shall include, among others, a review of the relationship in a number of fields, viz., commercial, cultural, economic, educational, financial, industrial, investment, legal, judicial, political, scientific, social, sports, technical, technological and tourism. The Philippines is one of the most promising newly-industrialised countries in South East Asia with exports moving away from agriculture to electronics, petroleum products and other goods.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to the Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC) for Mauritius being submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The INDC focuses on adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change, reduction of GHG emission and means of implementation. The recommendations comprise a mix of actions and outcome based on the specificities of Mauritius.

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10. Cabinet has agreed to the Prime Minister making regulations under the Maritime Zones Act for the conduct of marine scientific research in the Exclusive Economic Zone and the Continental Shelf of Mauritius. The regulations will provide the legal basis to abide by the relevant provisions of UNCLOS, including the procedures as regards authorization to conduct marine scientific research, and appending conditions, for any request to conduct marine scientific research in the maritime zones of Mauritius.

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11. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Technology, Communication and Innovation signing a Memorandum of Understanding in the area of e-Governance with the Government of Estonia. The Memorandum of Understanding covers the following -

- (a) how Estonia's X-Road framework in Mauritius can be customized/adapted for Mauritius;
- (b) modeling of the Estonian Digital identity and ancillary basic registries;
- (c) awareness on Cyber Security and protection of critical infrastructure;
- (d) setting up of a regional e-Governance Academy; and
- (e) cooperation of ICT companies for implementing e-services in Mauritius.

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12. Cabinet has agreed to the National Development Unit signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the Field of Rural Development with the Ministry of Rural Development, Government of the Republic of India. The Memorandum of Understanding provides, among others, for -

- (a) the exchange of documents, and scientific and technical information, together with policies and support measures, to foster rural development;
- (b) collaboration on strengthening human resource capacity in the field of rural development; and
- (c) the facilitation of the transfer of latest technology, state-of-the-art equipment, and share best practices.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the following events would be held in Mauritius under the aegis of the Financial Services Commission –

- (a) the SADC Committee of Insurance, Securities and Non-Banking Financial Authorities Familiarisation and Training Programme in November 2015, aiming at exchanging information and sharing experiences on the regulatory and supervisory frameworks and practices of the non-banking financial authorities with SADC; and
- (b) the International Organization of Securities Commissions Africa/Middle East Regional Committee Meeting and Conference, the umbrella body of the capital market regulators in the region, in 2016.

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14. Cabinet has taken note that the International Bunker Industry Association (IBIA) Regional Forum would be held in Mauritius in October 2015. The theme of the Forum will be *“Mauritius: A Bunker Hub Driving the Ocean Economy”*. The objective of the Forum is to bring together the marine fuels industry, both local and international, and provide a platform where all upcoming challenges, such as regulatory, operational and efficiency, will be addressed by expert speakers from the IBIA. It will also contribute to develop professionalism across the local industry and be a means of promoting Mauritius as a regional bunkering hub.

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15. Cabinet has agreed to the National Disaster Scheme 2015 Edition that defines the composition, roles and responsibilities of the various national and local Disaster Committees, Ministries and Departments, as well as other institutions involved in risk reduction, preparedness, and management before, during and in the aftermath of a natural disaster, such as cyclone, torrential rain, and tsunami. A new system has been introduced to enhance the national effectiveness and efficiency in disaster risk reduction and management. The System encompasses the whole spectrum of the disaster management cycle with emphasis on a coordinated multi-agency approach with greater focus on disaster risk reduction based on comprehensive multi-hazard mapping for the country. The National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council, chaired by the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development, and Disaster and Beach Management, would, *inter alia*, be responsible for coordinating the implementation of disaster risk reduction and management policies.

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16. Cabinet has taken note that, at the 11th African Games held in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, Mauritius obtained a total of 14 medals, i.e., 5 gold, 4 silver and 5 bronze. Mauritian athletes excelled in badminton by winning 2 gold medals in women’s single and team events, 1 silver medal in women’s double, and 1 bronze medal in women’s single.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Minister of Youth and Sports visited Doha, Qatar on the invitation of the Director General of International Medical Affairs of the Aspetar Orthopaedic and Sports Medicine Hospital. The purpose of the visit was to explore areas of collaboration in the field of sports medicine.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized to mark the World Mental Health Day commemorated on 10 October. The theme chosen by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for this year is “**Dignity in Mental Health**”. The activities would include an official function at Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre, an exhibition of creative activities and sale of items manufactured by inmates, sensitization campaign on mental health issues, and a Walk by the staff of the Brown Sequard Mental Health Care Centre and NGOs.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organized to mark the United Nations International Day of Older Persons commemorated on 01 October. The theme for the Day is “**Sustainability and Age Inclusiveness in the Urban Environment**”. The Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Reform Institutions would hold a national function comprising, among others, a cultural programme, and performances by the finalists of Dance Competitions that were organized by the Senior Citizens Council.

Cabinet has also taken note that the 2015 Global Age Watch Index, that measures the well-being and quality of life of the elderly in four domains, namely income security, health, capability and enabling environment, has ranked Mauritius 42<sup>nd</sup> on the Index, the highest in the Africa region. Mauritius leads the way with a universal pension and social insurance scheme, making it among the top ten globally in income security.

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19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research to Reunion Island. The purpose of the mission was to pursue discussions on the development of an integrated strategy for cooperation in education at the regional level, learn more about the education system of Reunion Island, meet key stakeholders of the Education Sector, and reinforce partnership between the two islands with a view to promoting exchanges in the context of the ongoing reforms in the Education Sector, particularly with the advent of the Nine Year Schooling project. The Minister met high level dignitaries, namely the *Prefet de la Réunion*, the *Recteur de L'Académie*, the Mayor of Saint André, visited a number of institutions and had meetings with regard to cooperation in the Technical, and Vocational Educational and Training and Research.

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20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research to India where she participated in the 10<sup>th</sup> World Hindi Conference. The main theme of the Conference was “**Hindi Jagat: Vistaar evam sambhavnayein**” - *World of Hindi: Expansion and Scope*. The Conference deliberated on a series of contemporary issues and discussions focused, among others, on ways of expanding the horizon and promoting its common use in the domains of science and technology, ICT, Administration, foreign policy, law and the media. The Conference agreed to the 11<sup>th</sup> World Hindi Conference being held in Mauritius in 2018.

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21. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to Glasgow, Scotland, where he participated in the First World Hepatitis Summit. According to the WHO, viral Hepatitis is the seventh leading cause of death in the world killing around 1.45 million people every year. In Mauritius, Hepatitis C is more predominant and problematic than Hepatitis B. Sub-population studies carried out indicate that the seroprevalence of Hepatitis C Virus (HCV) is essentially among blood donors (0.3%) and people who inject drugs, which account for around 96% of the total number. New medication is now available to cure HCV and will considerably reduce the cost of treatment per person.

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22. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade to Gabon where he participated in the 14th AGOA Forum. The theme of the Forum was “**AGOA at 15: Charting a Course for a Sustainable US-Africa Trade and Investment Partnership**”. The Forum, *inter alia*, considered the current US-Africa Trade and Investment Partnership and beyond, how to ensure compliance with the standard requirements and modalities to broaden the benefits from AGOA, and connecting Africa through ICT: Bridging the digital divide.

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23. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives to Malaysia where he attended the First International Craft Festival as personal guest of Mr Datuk Seri Mohd Nazri Abdul Aziz, Minister of Tourism and Culture of Malaysia. The objective of the Festival was to promote unique craft products from selected countries in order to showcase quality design concepts from all over the world, and provide participants the opportunity to organise craft demonstrations. More than 70 art galleries and groups, representing some 400 entrepreneurs from 30 countries, including Mauritius, participated in the Craft Festival. In the margins of the Festival, the Minister had meetings with stakeholders involved in both the Small and Medium Enterprises Sector and the Cooperative Sector, as well as Mr Mond Izham Abdullah, Director of the SME Corporation of Malaysia.

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24. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent visit of the Minister of Environment, Sustainable Development and Disaster and Beach Management to Rodrigues. He, among others, visited the Petit Gabriel Multi-Purpose Centre, donated a smoke meter for the measurement of opacity of exhaust emission of motorcycles and motor vehicles, attended the Validation Workshop on Intended Nationally Determined Contributions, and launched a workshop on the advantages of bio-farming.

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25. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius accepting the accession of the Kingdom of Morocco to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. The objectives of the Convention are, among others, to -

- (a) secure the prompt return of children wrongfully removed to or retained in any Contracting State; and
- (b) ensure that rights of custody and access under the law of one Contracting State are effectively respected in the other Contracting States.

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26. Taking into consideration representations made by fishers, and weather conditions prevailing during the net fishing season, Cabinet has agreed to the net fishing season being extended up to 10 October 2015.

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27. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Arassen Kallee as independent member of the Employment Relations Tribunal in replacement of Mr Moonsamy Ramasamy.

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28. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the following Committee/Councils -

- (a) the Executive Committee of the National Women Entrepreneur Council with Ms Nadine Marie Anouchka Catherine as Chairperson;
- (b) the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC) with Mr Sanjiv Mulloo as Chairperson; and
- (c) the Building Control Advisory Council with Mr Seemadree Pilly (Ramdas) Mootanah as Chairperson.

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