

## **CABINET DECISIONS – 26 JUNE 2015**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a National Price Consultative Council with a view to providing a platform for a meaningful evaluation and monitoring of prices of basic commodities and better protecting consumers. The main objectives of the Council, among others, are to advise the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection on the formulation and implementation of policies relating to consumer protection and the price of goods and services, and ensure the cooperation and participation of consumers and consumer associations in matters which affect their interest.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a National Ocean Council in line with Government Programme 2015-2019 to make the ocean economy an important industry to sustain economic diversification, job creation and wealth generation. The main objects of the Council would be, *inter alia*, to -

- (a) coordinate technical cooperation and assistance provided by international institutions and foreign experts in the formulation of a National Ocean Policy Paper;
- (b) set up and drive a Government-private sector working group to assess and promote economic activities, capacity building, marine good governance, as well as other developmental needs of the individual sectors of the ocean economy;
- (c) assess the provision of modern logistics, infrastructure and services for the development of the maritime and shipping industry; and
- (d) formulate a new action plan for the shipping industry that would include developmental opportunities for the maritime training academy, the flagship registry, super yachts, ship repair, and ship maintenance and refurbishment.

The National Ocean Council would be chaired by Dr Jawaharlal Lallchand who holds a PhD in Economics and Finance from the University of Cambridge, UK and has, *inter alia*, worked for the World Bank.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) signing a Data Sharing Agreement on the Musa Germplasm Information System (MGIS) with Bioversity International, France. The aims of the MGIS are to collect and share accession level information, from *Musa spp.* collections worldwide, such as passport data, characterization and pre-evaluation data, as well as photographs. Under the Agreement, Bioversity International would, among others, provide the necessary software tools, together with the appropriate support, to enable FAREI to subsequently upload and manage its own data.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI) signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the International Center for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), a non-profit research and development organization dedicated to reducing poverty and hunger, as well as improving human nutrition in the tropics through research aimed at increasing the eco-efficiency of agriculture. The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to establish a long term relationship for the purposes of exploiting each party's complementary research, institutional and capacity development, and impart pathway skills to further their respective missions.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands signing a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Maritime Transport with the Arab Republic of Egypt. The main objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding are to –

- (a) promote cooperation to develop maritime relations between the two countries;
- (b) enhance cooperation in the fields of Port State Control, the prevention of illicit migration on board vessels, and marine pollution; and
- (c) share technical assistance in developing merchant fleets.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that there was a landslide along the Terre Rouge-Verdun Link Road between Ripailles and Valton roundabouts on 23 June 2015 due to heavy rainfall in the region. The road between the roundabouts of Ripailles and Valton had been closed to traffic. An assessment of the roadworthiness, including the geo-technical aspects of the whole region, would be carried out by ARQ (Pty) South Africa, consulting firm advising the Ministry of Public Infrastructure and Land Transport on the Terre Rouge-Verdun Link Road.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the services of the Union of Water Boards would be sought to set up the Land Drainage Authority and provide the necessary networking and capacity building to the National Development Unit. In this context, a Memorandum of Understanding is being finalized.

Cabinet has further taken note that a Bill on land drainage would, shortly, be introduced in the National Assembly.

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8. Cabinet has taken note that the Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd (MSCL) is being restructured to improve its efficacy, efficiency, competence and financial performance. The operational structure is being redesigned, and the MSCL Coraline Ship Agency is being merged with the MSCL company as proposed by the KPMG Advisory Services in its Report.

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9. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius acceding to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The Convention, an international Treaty adopted in 2008, prohibits the use, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian laws. The commonest type of cluster munitions takes the form of air-dropped and ground-launched explosive weapons that can cause excessive loss of life and injury to civilians and infrastructure. As at June 2015, 116 countries, including 42 from the African region, had signed or ratified the Convention.

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10. Cabinet has taken note of measures taken by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security to control the population of stray dogs, including a mass sterilization campaign.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the United States House of Representatives adopted the Trade Preferences Extension Act of 2015 on 25 June 2015, thereby renewing the Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) preferences for a further period of 10 years to 30 September 2025. This would enable AGOA-eligible countries, including Mauritius, to preserve their preferential access to the US market for the next ten years.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications to South Africa and Palestine.

In South Africa, the Deputy Prime Minister participated in the 25th Ordinary Session of the African Union (AU) Assembly of Heads of State and Government. The theme of the Conference was "*Year of Women Empowerment and Development Towards Africa's Agenda 2063*". Among the Declarations and Resolution adopted were a resolution on the Chagos Archipelago, and the Africa Agenda 2063.

The Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Tourism and External Communications was invited by the Hon Mrs Rula Ma'ayah, Minister of Tourism and Antiquities of the State of Palestine, to participate in the International Conference on Religious Tourism. The Conference addressed topics on innovative approaches to tourism management at religious sites, balancing heritage preservation and tourism development with the participation of host communities. He also had a meeting with the Minister of Tourism and Antiquities on collaboration in the field of tourism.

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13. Cabinet has taken note that the Minister of Agro-Industry and Food Security participated in an International Conference on the theme “*No More Food to Waste – Global Action To Stop Food Losses And Food Waste*” held in the Hague, Netherlands. The main objectives of the Conference were to scale up solutions, lessons learned and good practices for reducing food loss and waste, and champion joint actions and partnerships throughout the food supply chain to reduce food loss and waste.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Council of the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare with Dr Dewan Sibartie as Chairperson.

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