

CABINET DECISIONS – 10 JULY 2015

1. Cabinet has taken note that the Prime Minister would advise the President of the Republic to set up a Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking as announced in Government Programme 2015-2019. The terms of reference of the Commission are to inquire into, and report on, all aspects of drug trafficking in Mauritius, including:-

- (a) the scale and extent of the illicit drug trade and consumption in Mauritius and their economic and social consequences;
- (b) sources/points of origin/routes of illicit drugs;
- (c) the channels of entry and distribution of drugs in Mauritius;
- (d) the channels of entry and distribution of drugs in prisons;
- (e) the availability of new types of drugs, including synthetic and designer drugs, in Mauritius;
- (f) linkages between drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorist financing and other crimes;
- (g) the adequacy of existing legislation;
- (h) the operational effectiveness of the various agencies involved in the fight against drug trafficking;
- (i) the adequacy of the existing resources, including human expertise technology and equipment, to detect and counter any attempt to introduce drug, including designer and synthetic drugs, in Mauritius;
- (j) the need for fostering linkages and coordination among the various agencies and other local, regional and international entities dealing with drugs related matters for better strategic direction;
- (k) the effectiveness of drug treatment and rehabilitation programmes, as well as harm reduction strategies, national prevention, education and drug repression strategies, with emphasis on youth;
- (l) the tracking of funds in order to identify illicit activities;
- (m) whether there is any evidence of political influence in the drug trafficking trade; and
- (n) any other matter connected with, or relevant or incidental to paragraphs (a) to (m) above, and make recommendations as appropriate, including:-
 - (i) such action as is deemed necessary to fight the problem of importation, distribution and consumption of illicit drugs in the Republic of Mauritius; and
 - (ii) any statutory amendments, as may be necessary, to better safeguard the interests of the public at large.

The Commission of Inquiry would be chaired by Mr Paul Lam Shang Leen, former Judge of the Supreme Court, and have as Assessors Mr Samiollah Lauthan, Social Worker, former Member of the National Assembly, and currently member of the Human Rights Division of the National Human Rights Commission, and Dr Ravind Kumar Domun, Acting Director, Health Services, Ministry of Health and Quality of Life.

2. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Ministry of Tourism and External Communications, 65,459 tourists visited Mauritius in June 2015 as compared to 60,445 in June 2014, i.e., an increase of 8.3%. For the period January to June 2015, tourist arrivals reached 534,182 as compared to 490,697 during the same period in 2014, i.e., an increase of 8.9%. Positive growth had been registered in arrivals from UK (+12.0%), Switzerland (+11.9%), France (+5.5%), Germany (+3.5%), China (+60%), India (+17.5%), and South Africa (+16.6%).

3. Cabinet has taken note that a Ministerial Team led by the Vice-Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Lands had negotiations with stakeholders on the supply of cattle on the occasion of "Qurbani" and it has been decided that the price for ex-Socovia farm for South African Cross Breed Cattle would be Rs125 per kilo.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Minister of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection would look into the pricing system of other fresh meat products including lamb, chicken and goat.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the First Blue Economy Conference of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) being held in Mauritius in September 2015. The main objective of the Conference is to forge a new partnership among IORA Member States in an effort to sustain equitable development of the Blue Economy in the Indian Ocean Rim region. Discussions would focus on fisheries and aquaculture, renewable ocean energy, seaport and shipping, and seabed exploration and minerals. Participants from Member States, namely Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Singapore, South Africa, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen, would attend the Conference.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the *Sub-Regional Training Course to develop Energy Supply Models for Island and Isolated Countries*, organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), would be held in Mauritius in August 2015. The objective of the training course is to develop local capabilities and skills on -

- (a) conducting comparative assessment of the various energy supply options for meeting energy demand;

- (b) working out alternative scenarios on sustainable development to meet the goals of regional integration in terms of accessibility, affordability, security of supply and environment protection; and
- (c) using the IAEA's analytical model "MESSAGE" (Model for Energy Supply Strategy Alternatives and their General Environmental Impacts).

Some 35 participants from Member States, namely Botswana, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Seychelles, Zambia and Zimbabwe, and three experts from the IAEA would attend the training course.

6. Cabinet has taken note that the International Council for Commercial Arbitration (ICCA) 2016 Congress would be held in Mauritius in May 2016. The ICCA Congress, a high-level biannual prestigious worldwide event, brings together major public, private and multilateral actors in the field of international arbitration with a view to promoting the use and improving the processes of arbitration, conciliation and other forms of resolving international commercial disputes.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Finance and Economic Development to Dubai, India and France.

In Dubai, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development had high-level discussions with DP World, Government of Dubai's designated entity to carry out cooperation with Mauritius on investment in the Port Development project, including the Freeport and Cruise Segments.

In India, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, accompanied by the Minister of Financial Services, Good Governance and Institutional Reforms and the Attorney General, had meetings with -

- (a) HE Arun Jaitley, Minister of Finance, and HE Shrimati Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs on the Double Taxation Convention Agreement; and
- (b) HE Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Communications and Information Technology on the proposed TEMA Technology Park project in Ghana.

In Paris, the Minister of Finance and Economic Development signed the Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), and had meetings with economic operators on investment in Mauritius.

8. 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 the Bahamas where she participated in the 19th Conference of Commonwealth Education Ministers (19CCEM). The theme of the Conference was **Quality Education for Equitable Development: Performance, Paths and Productivity**. The main objective of the Conference was to provide a platform to Commonwealth Education Ministers to -

- (a) increase the understanding of critical issues covering Performance, Paths and Productivity in education;
- (b) examine barriers to equity, access and quality education and identify key enabling factors to address those issues; and
- (c) discuss the process for harmonizing plans and strategies to support the achievement of the new goals and targets of the Post-2015 Education Development Framework with Commonwealth priorities.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to the People's Republic of China. He had meetings and working sessions with the Chinese authorities to further foster cooperation in the fields of arts and culture and signed the new Executive Programme under the Cultural Exchange Programme for the period 2015 to 2017. Under the Cultural Exchange Programme, the Chinese authorities would extend assistance for the restoration of documents of the National Archives Department, provide training in the fields of preservation and conservation of documents and paintings, and help further promote the film industry.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries, Shipping and Outer Islands to Japan. He had discussions with the Japanese authorities on cooperation and investment in the fisheries sector and capacity building. He also reviewed the agreement on the operation of longliner vessels in Mauritius waters signed with the Japan Tuna Fisheries Cooperative Association.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board with Mr Charanjivsingh Romooah, Accountant General, as Chairperson.
