

**CABINET DECISIONS – 13 OCTOBER 2017**

1. Cabinet has taken note that HE Mr Danny Antoine Rollen Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles, would effect a State Visit to Mauritius from 26 to 29 October 2017. During the Visit, the President would, among others, pay a courtesy call on the President of the Republic of Mauritius, meet the Prime Minister, participate in a Business Forum, and effect a visit at the Aapravasi Ghat and Le Morne Cultural Landscape.

The following Memoranda of Understanding would also be signed in the presence of the President of Seychelles –

- (a) on cooperation in the Health Sector for the provision of medical personnel, the exchange of experience and technical assistance; and
- (b) on twinning between Rodrigues and the Island of La Digue with a view to promoting and strengthening cultural ties, exchanging experience and best practices in various areas, including marine, education, fisheries, aquaculture, tourism, technology and investment promotion.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to Government making a contribution of USD100,000 to assist the Government of Antigua and Barbuda that was recently hit by Hurricane Irma.

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3. Cabinet agreed to the following categories of persons being exempted from work permit requirements to facilitate the development of the Blue Economy and boost the fishing industry –

- (a) persons employed on foreign registered ships when such ships are operating within Mauritius waters as defined in the Maritime Zones Act;
- (b) persons employed on board ships registered under the Merchant Shipping Act;
- (c) persons employed on foreign registered dredgers and tugs; and
- (d) persons employed on a foreign or a locally registered fishing boat/vessel in Mauritius.

The Minister of Labour, Industrial Relations, Employment and Training would make regulations accordingly.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of arrangements being made by the National Property Fund Limited for the refund to cooperative societies that had invested in the Super Cash Back Gold Scheme and the Bramer Asset Management Limited.

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5. Cabinet has agreed to the Road Traffic Act being amended to render the alteration, forgery, use, and sale of counterfeited parking coupons and reserved parking permits, an offence under law.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that, according to the last monthly report published by the Statistics Unit of the Ministry of Tourism, 96,282 tourists visited Mauritius in September 2017 as compared to 91,384 in September 2016, i.e., an increase of 5.4%. Tourist arrivals reached 934,679 for the period January to September 2017 as compared to 880,890 during the same period in 2016.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the special leisure activities, namely hiking, mountaineering, youth exchange programme, *chasse aux trésors*, youth raid, camping, a National Play Station Gaming competition, and a Striker and Chess competition, that would be organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports in November and December 2017 to provide quality leisure for the self-development of youth, and the development of their resilience and sense of belonging to society.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Research and Education with the Scottish Association for Marine Science. The main objective of the Memorandum of Understanding is to foster a close working relationship in order to provide expertise and guidance on the development of research and education to support the growth of the Blue Economy, and to cooperate in securing funding to support relevant research in marine science, fisheries, aquaculture, marine biotechnology, satellite technology, and marine renewable energy, including sustainable coastal ecosystem-based management and resource use.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that a Conference on Marine Spatial Planning would be held in Mauritius in November 2017. The main objectives of the Conference are to –

- (a) explore strategies for the elaboration of a Marine Spatial Plan in line with the Sustainable Development Goal 14 - Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine reserves for sustainable development;
- (b) promote sharing of experiences and good practices in Marine Spatial Planning among Indian Ocean Rim Association Member States;
- (c) promote collaborative research and development for ocean observatory and data management in the Indian Ocean; and
- (d) promote sustainable ocean economy development in Small Island Developing States through regional initiatives and make recommendations towards the implementation of Marine Spatial Planning good practices.

The theme of the Conference is “**Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 14)**”. Some 21 Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association would participate in the Conference.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that the 11th World Hindi Conference would be held in Mauritius in August 2018.

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11. Cabinet has taken note that the four new generating units installed at the St Louis Power Station are operational as scheduled, and without any cost overrun. The plant is equipped with modern features optimised for low emissions, waste heat recuperation exhaust gas boilers, waste incineration, and two 45-metre high exhaust stacks. The carbon dioxide emission is low and the noise level is 55 decibels, which is within the environmental standards. The new Power Station has a total capacity of 67.4 MW.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities that would be organised by the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives in the context of the International Cooperative Credit Union Day, commemorated on the third Thursday of October each year, namely –

- (a) a *Journée de Réflexion* on the theme “*Credit Union fer ou rêve vinne réalité*”;
- (b) an exhibition on the history and evolution of Cooperative Credit Unions;
- (c) an Open Day at all Cooperative Credit Unions and a Family Fun Day;
- (d) an awareness campaign on the importance of and the facilities offered by Cooperative Credit Unions; and
- (e) launching of a *fresque compétition* among the youth, in line with the Ministry’s vision to rejuvenate the cooperative movement.

The theme chosen for this year is “**Dreams Thrive Here**”.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Extraordinary Council of Ministers’ Meeting of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) held on 2 and 3 October 2017 in Mauritius. The main issues discussed were –

- (a) the Reports of the Audit Committee and Budget Committee;
- (b) the IOC Host Country Agreement;
- (c) the Transformation of the IOC into a Community;
- (d) the *Plan de Développement Stratégique 2018-2021*; and
- (e) the Post-Cotonou Agreement.

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14. 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 Slovenia where she attended the Second Open Education Resources World Congress. The theme of the Second Congress was “*Open Education Resources for Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education: From Commitment to Action.*” The main objectives of the Congress were to –

- (a) examine the strategies to meet the challenges of mainstreaming Open Education Resources practices in education systems worldwide; and
- (b) discuss the role that Open Education Resources can play in achieving Sustainable Development Goal 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and provide lifelong learning opportunities for all.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Tourism to France and the Netherlands. In France, the Minister attended the International French Travel Market Top Resa, leading French Business-to-Business annual event for the French travel and tourism industry. The Minister also attended the General Assembly of the Vanilla Islands Organisation where cruises and other activities were discussed. The Minister of Tourism had meetings, among others, with –

- (a) representatives of Aviareps, PR Agency of the MTPA, for an overview of the French market;
- (b) Mr Philippe Brieu, Manager France, Offline Europe and North America of Air Mauritius, to discuss future joint promotional actions; and
- (c) representatives of French Blue on flights to Mauritius.

In the Netherlands, the Minister had a meeting with the representatives of KLM on the direct flights to be operated by the company from Amsterdam to Mauritius scheduled as from 28 October 2017, and the joint venture with Air Mauritius as announced in Budget Speech 2017-2018.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Health and Quality of Life to Seychelles where he attended the 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of African Ministers of Health of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The objectives of the meeting were to –

- (a) measure progress made in the implementation of the declarations and the recommendations from the 5th African Ministers of Health SIDS meeting;
- (b) share new developments on common challenges related to health care, health financing, universal health coverage, child nutrition, infant mortality, abuse of illicit drugs, prevention and treatment of diabetes, management of vector-borne diseases, and health disaster management; and
- (c) discuss on ways of strengthening SIDS networking and better collaboration within SIDS in the Africa region, including pooled procurement for essential medicines.

In the margins of the Meeting, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life had discussions with Mr Michel Sidibe, Executive Director of UNAIDS, on assistance and support to address the problem of HIV/AIDS.

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17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Arts and Culture to France where he attended the nomination ceremony of Jane Constance as “UNESCO Artist for Peace”. The Minister of Arts and Culture, together with Ms Jane Constance, had a meeting with Ms Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, who briefed Ms Jane Constance on her forthcoming responsibilities as “UNESCO Artist for Peace” and her various involvements to support UNESCO’s work in the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. During the visit, the Minister of Arts and Culture also had meetings, among others, with –

- (a) Mr Jean-Luc Martinez, President-Director of the Louvre Museum on technical cooperation; and
- (b) Mr Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director General of UNESCO for Culture, and Mr Tim Curtis, Head of the Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, on technical assistance for the drafting of the “Status of the Artist Bill”.

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18. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development to Reunion Island where he attended the International Conference on Adaptation to Climate Change. The main objective of the Conference was to highlight the experiences of the islands and the regions on dealing with climate change adaptation and resilience building. Discussions focused on –

- (a) climate change adaptation in regional governments and islands;
- (b) innovative solutions on adaptation for islands and coastal areas;
- (c) climate change impacts in social and economic sectors; and
- (d) environmental challenges including food security.

The Minister of Social Security, National Solidarity, and Environment and Sustainable Development had meetings, amongst others, with Ms Annick Girardin, *Ministre des Outre-Mer* of France; Mr Didier Robert, *Président de la Région Réunion*; and Ms Maria Cecilia Alvarado, Vice-President of Azuay, Republic of Ecuador.

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19. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare to India where she participated in the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Workshop on Women's Entrepreneurship and Skill Development, and the Innovation Session on "*Crafting a Blueprint for shared and sustainable growth through innovation*". The objectives of the Workshop and Innovation Session were, inter alia, to –

- (a) elaborate a framework geared towards integrating gender perspectives in IORA's programmes and activities;
- (b) support gender analysis and equality to scale up IORA's efforts to close gender gaps, enhance economic growth, and strengthen the sustainability of development initiatives undertaken within the region; and
- (c) explore cross-country partnership opportunities in the area of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

During her visit, the Minister of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare paid a courtesy call on Hon Mrs Manekha Gandhi, Minister of Women and Child Welfare, with whom she discussed best practices and experiences on policies, projects and programmes in place for the empowerment of women and the welfare of children.

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20. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping to Spain and Malta. In Spain, the Minister attended the International Congress on Climate Change and Fisheries that delved on the impact of climate change on the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sectors.

In Malta, the Minister of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping attended the high-level Ocean Conference that had as theme '*Our Ocean – An Ocean for Life*'. Panel sessions focused on Marine Pollution, Marine Protection, Maritime Security, Building the Sustainable Blue Economy, Sustainable Fisheries, and "Our Ocean Leadership".

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