

**CABINET DECISIONS – 25 MAY 2018**

1. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius joining the Yaoundé Declaration. The Yaoundé Declaration was made in the margins of the 10<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting of the OECD Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. The participating Ministers of Finance of African countries and Heads of Tax Administrations of Africa had discussions on means to fight tax evasion and avoidance as well as illicit financial flows and agreed to press for the African Union to begin high level discussions on tax cooperation and illicit financial flows and their link to domestic resource mobilization.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the Mauritius Standards Bureau supporting the initiative led by the British Standards Institution for the creation of a Commonwealth Standards Network and becoming a member thereof. The objectives of the Commonwealth Standards Network would be to set up a framework for capacity building, reducing non-tariff barriers among Commonwealth countries and strengthening the Quality Infrastructure of Member States based on best international practices. The Commonwealth Standards Network would, inter alia, –

- (a) establish an online portal to increase information sharing between Commonwealth National Standards Bodies and key stakeholders; and
- (b) map out and identify Commonwealth members' economic priorities, and establish a framework of standards that can be used to support these objectives.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to amendments being made to –

- (a) the Consumer Protection (Safety Requirements) Regulations 2017 with a view to exempting imports of goods specified in the Schedule from the provisions of the Regulations where such imports are meant for personal use and for use in Government projects and public organisations; and
- (b) the Toys (Safety) Regulations 1994 to enable the import of toys for personal use to be exempted from the essential safety requirements specified in the First Schedule to the Regulations.

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4. Cabinet has agreed to the participation of Mauritius in the Dubai Expo 2020 and the establishment of a National Coordinating Committee to oversee the participation of Mauritius towards Expo 2020. Dubai Expo 2020 is the first World Expo to be held in the Middle East and Southern Asia region. The participation of some 180 countries and 25 million visitors is expected in the event which would be organized over a period of six months from October 2020 to April 2021 in Dubai, to coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the creation of the United Arab Emirates. The central theme of the Dubai Expo 2020 will be *'Connecting Minds, Creating the Future'*, along with three sub themes namely, *'Mobility, Sustainability, and Opportunity'*. Participation in Dubai Expo 2020 will provide an opportunity to raise the profile of Mauritius as an investment and tourist destination not only in the Gulf region but also at international level to achieve our trade, investment and tourism objectives.

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5. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the International Conference on Digitalisation and Sustainable Tourism held recently in Mauritius. The Conference brought together high-level policy makers including Ministers of Tourism, CEOs of Tourism Boards, Tourism professionals, private operators, Industry Associations, trade unions, academics and experts to reflect on the challenges and opportunities of digitalisation for the tourism industry and share the best practices driving the global tourism industry. The Mauritius Declaration on Digitalisation and Sustainable Tourism was adopted. The recommendations include, among others, –

- (a) creation of a Working Group on Digital Platforms;
- (b) promotion and diversification of sustainable tourism;
- (c) formulation of national regulatory and policy frameworks that require the tourism industry to protect the privacy of visitors;
- (d) compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation of the European Union;
- (e) reskilling of workforce for the tourism industry;
- (f) rigorous application of 'Green ICT' techniques to ensure minimal environmental impacts;
- (g) optimal use of geoinformatics technologies for the conservation and promotion of cultural heritage; and
- (h) establishment of an Indian Ocean Agency on "Climate change and protection and conservation of the biodiversity".

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6. Cabinet has taken note of the findings and recommendations of the Court of Investigation which was set up to look into the circumstances that led to the outbreak of fire on board Yacht “Gryphon” and the death of Mr Ravidutt Nundlall Seebaruth on the yacht on 19 April 2017. The recommendations cover various areas, including safety, security and training besides the need for legislative amendments. The Ministry of Ocean Economy, Marine Resources, Fisheries and Shipping would examine the recommendations in consultation with all relevant stakeholders and take appropriate actions.

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7. Cabinet has taken note of the list of Public Holidays for the year 2019 which is as follows –

New Year	-	Tuesday 01 January
New Year	-	Wednesday 02 January
Thaipooosam Cavadee	-	Monday 21 January
Abolition of Slavery	-	Friday 01 February
Chinese Spring Festival	-	Tuesday 05 February
Maha Shivaratree	-	Monday 04 March
Independence and Republic Day	-	Tuesday 12 March
Ugaadi	-	Saturday 06 April
Labour Day	-	Wednesday 01 May
Eid-UI-Fitr**	-	Wednesday 05 June
Ganesh Chaturthi	-	Tuesday 03 September
Divali	-	Sunday 27 October
All Saints Day	-	Friday 01 November
Arrival of Indentured Labourers	-	Saturday 02 November
Christmas	-	Wednesday 25 December

\*\*The exact date of this festival is subject to confirmation as its celebration depends on the visibility of the moon.

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8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the First Session of the Joint Commission between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Madagascar held recently in Mauritius. The following Agreement/Memoranda of Understanding were signed –

- (a) Accord commercial;
- (b) Mémorandum d'entente sur la coopération industrielle;
- (c) Mémorandum sur la coopération administrative mutuelle en matière douanière; and
- (d) Protocole d'Accord culturel.

The Joint Commission also took note of the status of draft Agreements/Memoranda of Understanding currently under negotiation by both sides. Mauritius and Madagascar have agreed to further strengthen cooperation within the Indian Ocean Commission, the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission and under the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement.

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9. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent missions of the Attorney General, Minister of Justice, Human Rights and Institutional Reforms to South Africa and Zambia. In South Africa, the Attorney General participated in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Consultation for development of International Guidelines on human rights and drugs policy (United Nations Development Program and International Centre on Human Rights and Drugs Policy). The work of the Global Consultation for development of International Guidelines on human rights and drugs policy is still in progress and not finalized and it may, in due course, add a further human rights dimension to the forthcoming National Drug Control Masterplan of Mauritius. In Zambia, the Attorney General participated in the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of COMESA Ministers of Justice and Attorneys General. The Meeting considered the Report of 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the COMESA Committee on Legal Affairs and discussed the coordination between COMESA Member States on UNCITRAL work relating to Investor-State Dispute Settlement.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that in the context of the commemoration of the International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, observed on 21 June, the Minister of Health and Quality of Life would organise a march on 28 June 2018 from the Parking area of New Taxi Stand to Sir Leckraz Teelock State Secondary School, Central Flacq, to create general awareness on the harmful effects of drugs and help in the campaign against drug addiction.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the programme of activities to mark the celebration of the Dragon Boat Festival 2018 on 10 June 2018 at Le Caudan Waterfront, namely –

- (a) a Dragon Boat Race;
- (b) a traditional défilé of lions and dragons; and
- (c) a cultural programme by local artists and a 51-member cultural troupe from Chongqing of the People's Republic of China.

The Chinese troupe would also perform at the Serge Constantin Theatre, Vacoas on 8 June 2018 and at the Auditorium of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute on 9 June 2018.

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12. Cabinet has taken note that the University of Mauritius would host the 5<sup>th</sup> biennial International Conference on Pure and Applied Chemistry (ICPAC) 2018 from 02 to 06 July 2018. The expected outcomes of the ICPAC 2018 are, among others, that –

- (a) participants would be updated on the latest research findings in chemical sciences and enlightened on the contribution of chemical sciences to a clean and healthy environment; and
- (b) potential partnership and collaborative ventures would be created between local and international institutions.

Some 150 international and 50 local participants are expected to attend the Conference.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Philip Ah Chuen as Chairperson of the Utility Regulatory Authority and Mrs Rosemary Elizabeth Winifred Anodin, PDSM as Commissioner.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the National Transport Corporation with Mr Ashvin Jain Gokhool as Chairperson.

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15. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Arun Bhinda as Chairperson of the Mauritius Society for Animal Welfare.

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