

CABINET DECISIONS – 26 JANUARY 2018

1. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius ratifying the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption. The objectives of the Convention are, inter alia, to:

- (a) promote and strengthen the development in Africa by each State Party, of mechanisms required to prevent, detect, punish and eradicate corruption and related offences in the public and private sectors;
- (b) coordinate and harmonize the policies and legislation between State Parties for the purposes of prevention, detection, punishment and eradication of corruption on the continent; and
- (c) establish the necessary conditions to foster transparency and accountability in the management of public affairs.

The Independent Commission Against Corruption would be designated as the national agency of Mauritius for the purpose of the Convention.

2. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the 13th Meeting of the Mauritius-Seychelles Joint Commission of the Extended Continental Shelf, held in Mauritius in January 2018. The main outcomes of the Meeting were –

- (a) the signing of an Agreement for the conduct of Multi-Client Seismic Surveys by Spectrum ASA;
- (b) the signing of an Agreement with the UNDP/GEF for the implementation of a project which will focus on building technical management capacity in marine spatial planning; and
- (c) action would be initiated by both countries to domesticate the Marine Scientific Research Code in their legislation.

3. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities to Abu Dhabi where he participated in the Eighth Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). The main highlight of the Assembly was the announcement of projects approved for funding by IRENA/Abu Dhabi Fund for Development. 89 projects had been received, out of which two were selected with Mauritius ranking first, followed by Rwanda. The project that would be funded for Mauritius, namely the solar home project consists in the installation of 10,000 solar PV rooftop panels on houses of households in the social tariff category and the Social Register.

In the margins of the Assembly, the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Energy and Public Utilities had a meeting with the Director General of IRENA, who congratulated Mauritius for the quality and the innovativeness of the solar home project which will support the poorer households and improve their quality of life. IRENA also hosted a special meeting for small island states with the aim of developing and securing finance for renewable energy projects.

4. Cabinet has taken note that EnergyNet Ltd of UK will host the 20th Africa Energy Forum in Mauritius in June 2018. EnergyNet Ltd organises investment meetings, investment forums and executive dialogues focused specifically on the power and industrial sectors across Africa and Latin America. It also facilitates investment summits where international investors can build relationships with credible African public sector stakeholders. The Forum would bring together policymakers, investors, power companies, banking institutions and international and regional agencies. Some 2,000 delegates are expected to attend the Forum.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the introduction of a Small Scale Distributed Generation Solar Photovoltaic Rebate Scheme for SMEs that will be implemented and managed by SME Mauritius Ltd. The Scheme includes -

- (a) the provision of a solar Photovoltaic installation not exceeding 5 kWp to an eligible SME; and
- (b) a one-off grant of 80% of the total cost of the Photovoltaic installation, not exceeding Rs100,000 based on an actual average market price of Rs60,000 per kWp.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Business, Enterprise and Cooperatives signing a Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in the fields of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) and Cooperatives Development with the State Administration for Industry and Commerce of the People's Republic of China. The Memorandum of Understanding would establish a general framework for bilateral relations and provide for cooperation in the following main areas –

- (a) capacity building for developing policy and institutional framework through exchange of experts for the development of MSMEs and Cooperatives;
- (b) exploring the possibility of holding joint workshops and conferences on issues of mutual interest and best practices in the fields of MSME and Cooperatives Development; and
- (c) training of entrepreneurs in various fields such as crafts or handicrafts.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the status of initiatives taken to support Export-Oriented Enterprises through two Schemes, namely the Speed-to-Market Scheme and the Exchange Rate Support Scheme, introduced in April 2017 and September 2017 respectively. The Speed to Market Scheme has effectively cushioned exporters to Europe against the significant appreciation of the rupee against the pound sterling since the BREXIT. The value of exports by air to Europe of the items covered under the Scheme has increased by 10% over the period April to December 2017 as compared to the same period in 2016. The Exchange Rate Support Scheme has cushioned against the depreciating US dollar.

8. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Consumer Protection signing a Memorandum of Understanding in the field of Consumer Protection with the State Administration of Industry and Commerce of the People's Republic of China. The Memorandum of Understanding provides, among others, for –

- (a) the exchange of information relating to laws, regulations, rules and legislative developments; and
- (b) the possibility of organising meetings and workshops to discuss significant issues of common concern and best practices.

9. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Humane Society International, an affiliate of the Humane Society of the United States, for the conduct of a dog population management campaign in the district of Flacq and the neighbourhood on a pilot basis. In this respect, the Humane Society International would conduct a mass spay/neuter and awareness campaign to demonstrate and establish a model for effective dog population management by using a scientific and humane approach. The Humane Society International has worked with government agencies and local groups around the world to safeguard public health through street dog vaccination and sterilization programmes.

10. Cabinet has agreed to the incorporation of the Financial Services Institute as the Financial Services Institute Co Ltd, a wholly Government owned company. The Institute will have, among others, the following objectives –

- (a) to raise the employability skills and knowledge of unemployed graduates to support Government's policy for job creation and bringing unemployed youth to the workplace; and
- (b) to build an appropriate ecosystem to propel Mauritius as an International Financial Services Centre of Excellence, with world-class industry professionals.

11. Cabinet has taken note of the setting up of a Regulatory Committee on Fintech and Innovation-driven Financial Services, to assist in paving the way for appropriate regulatory frameworks for encouraging and supporting the development of Fintech in Mauritius. The Committee which will comprise, inter alia, Lord Meghnad Desai and Lord St John of Bletso of the House of Lords, will, among others, -

- (a) assess the current regulatory set up with respect to Fintech and Innovation-driven Financial Services Regulations in Mauritius and make recommendations on the need to introduce new sets of regulations for Fintech and Innovation;
- (b) identify priority areas within the regulatory space of Fintech activities; and
- (c) advise on the drafting of regulations and guidelines by segment of activities, and how Mauritius needs to adapt itself for the benefit of its financial sector.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Most Honourable Andrew Michael Holness, ON, MP, Prime Minister of Jamaica, who was invited to be the guest of honour on the occasion of the Commemoration of the 183rd Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery, on 1 February 2018 would not be able to travel to Mauritius, in view of unforeseen circumstances. He has designated the Hon Ms Olivia Grange, CD, Minister of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sport, to represent him at the event.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the various activities that would be organised on the occasion of the celebration of the Spring Festival at national level, including –

- (a) an Exhibition showcasing Chinese customs for the birthday celebrations of the elderly;
- (b) a Carnival Floats Parade on the theme of the 50th Anniversary of Independence;
- (c) a Gala Show comprising performances by a cultural troupe from Gansu Province;
- (d) a Lion Dance and défilé by martial arts students and a cultural show by local artists; and
- (e) a Cultural Show on the occasion of the Lantern Festival.

14. Cabinet has taken note in the context of World Cancer Day 2018, commemorated on 4 February, the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life would –

- (a) carry out screening for breast and cervical cancer at Rivière du Rempart Youth Centre on 08 February 2018;
- (b) hold an exhibition on healthy life style and healthy diet; and
- (c) mount sensitisation campaigns on the risk factors of cancer and the preventive measures to be taken.

The theme chosen to mark the World Cancer Day for the period 2016 to 2018 is **‘We can. I can.’**

15. Cabinet has taken note of the main findings and recommendations of the “Report of Study on Knowledge, Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices of Breastfeeding in the Island of Mauritius” carried out by the Mauritius Institute of Health. The overall aim of the Study was to explore the knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and practices of breastfeeding among nursing mothers and to formulate recommendations for the promotion of breastfeeding practices. A workshop will be organised for relevant stakeholders to take cognizance of the pertinent findings and recommendations of the Study.

16. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research has developed a Student Support Programme that would provide additional, after-school-hours academic support, through the use of digital technology, to students of Grade 7, as from this year. The programme aims at providing students access to an online platform of digital contents which can be accessed at any location and from various digital devices. The objectives of the Student Support Programme are to:

- (a) support students through additional tutoring, in their quest to achieve academic and personal success irrespective of their economic and social backgrounds; and
- (b) give students the opportunity to have access to the best learning materials without any cost.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Tourism to Spain where he attended the 38th edition of International Tourism Trade Fair (FITUR) and INVESTOUR. FITUR, a leading business-to-business event for the travel and tourism industry, was attended by tourism promotion agencies, operators, hotels, travel agencies, airlines and cruise companies from 165 countries. In the margins of the Fair, the Minister of Tourism also attended the 9th edition of Tourism Investment and Business Forum for Africa organised jointly by UNWTO and Casa Africa. The Forum comprised two round table sessions on brand Africa and biodiversity as a driver for sustainable tourism. The Minister also had meetings, among others, with Hon Catherine Abelema Afeku, Minister of Tourism, Arts and Culture of Ghana on areas of cooperation in the field of tourism, and HE Zurab Pololikashvili, the newly appointed Secretary General of UNWTO.

18. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms to Singapore. The objective of the mission was to explore public administration and governance systems in the context of the implementation of the Public Sector Business Transformation Plan. The Minister of Civil Service and Administrative Reforms had meetings, inter alia, with –

- (a) Hon Sam Tan, Minister of State, Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Manpower and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and discussions focused on the formula which had been adopted by Singapore to make the Ministry of National Development and the Civil Service College complementary;
- (b) the Deputy Director of the Civil Service College of Singapore who explained the role of the College in empowering Public Officers and the high level training programmes on public policy and governance; and
- (c) the Senior Director, Policy and Planning of the Municipal Services Office regarding the Singaporean '**No Wrong Door**' policy which provides for a 'First Responder Protocol', focusing on convenience for citizens, holistic view of issues, cross-agency collaboration and co-ordinated response.

19. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of the Road Development Authority with Mr Emmanuel Claude Wong So as Chairperson.
