

CABINET DECISIONS – 27 APRIL 2018

1. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of Hon Pravind Kumar Jugnauth, Prime Minister to London where he participated in the 25th Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and the meetings he had in connection with the Chagos Archipelago issue. The Heads of Government took note of the report of Foreign Ministers Meeting, the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, the High Level Group on Governance of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the Commonwealth Ministers' Meeting on Small States. Following discussions, CHOGM 2018 adopted a Communiqué entitled "Towards a Common Future" which is divided into four sub-themes namely: A Fairer Future, A More Prosperous Future, A More Sustainable Future and A More Secure Future.

The Prime Minister also attended –

- (a) the Commonwealth Heads of Government Retreat. The agenda included issues relating to the Mandate of the High Level Group on Governance of the Commonwealth Secretariat, the renewed role of the organisation, the succession to the Queen and the holding of the next CHOGM; and
- (b) three high level round table discussions organised by the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council which brought together leaders of island States, African leaders and high level business leaders.

In the margins of the CHOGM, the Prime Minister had meetings with –

- (a) HE Mr Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India who invited him to be the Chief Guest at the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas next year and which would take place alongside the Kumbh Mela. The state of negotiations in relations to the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Partnership Agreement was also reviewed;
- (b) HE Mr Gaston Alfonso Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda who expressed his thanks for the donation made by Mauritius, following the passage of Cyclone Irma over his country in 2017 and discussed issues of bilateral interest including support in the field of disaster risk reduction and education; and
- (c) the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the President of Rwanda, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Prime Minister of Singapore and the President of South Africa, among others, and discussions centred on issues of common interests for the strengthening of bilateral relations and also on securing their support on the Chagos Archipelagos issue.

The Prime Minister also had a meeting with the legal advisors on the Chagos Archipelago issue to, inter alia, review the situation regarding written submissions made to the International Court of Justice and the need to canvass countries to make oral submissions at the hearing scheduled to start on 3 September 2018 in The Hague. He also addressed the All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on the same issue. The APPG comprises members from the House of Lords and the House of Commons.

2. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing the following Agreements/Memoranda of Understanding during the Ministerial Conference on Maritime Security to be held in Mauritius on 28 and 29 April 2018 –

- (a) Agreement for the setting up of a Regional Maritime Information Exchange and Sharing Mechanism in the Western Indian Ocean Region;
- (b) Regional Agreement on the Coordination of Operations at Sea in the Western Indian Ocean; and
- (c) Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on Cooperation on Crime Prevention and Drug Control.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, as Chair of the Indian Ocean Commission, would sign a Memorandum of Understanding between United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the Indian Ocean Commission on Cooperation on Crime Prevention and Drug Control.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Institute for Environmental Analytics, UK and the Ministry of Energy and Public Utilities to carry out a renewable energy resource assessment in Mauritius. The scope of the project would include –

- (a) use of enhanced modelling techniques to improve the resolution, extent, accuracy and availability of data on intermittent renewable energy resources for subsequent planning activity;
- (b) quantification of the uncertainty in intermittent energy sources in order to improve decision making on renewable energy investments; and
- (c) allowing in-country stakeholders to define and agree on clear future stages of development in their strategy for high levels of penetration of intermittent resources.

4. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on Cultural Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Mauritius and the Arab Republic of Egypt. The aims of the Memorandum of Understanding are to further strengthen the friendly ties between the two countries and to share know-how and skills in the promotion of cultural programmes/events, cinema, literature, music, heritage, theatre, puppetry, traditional crafts, visual arts, folkloric arts and people to people diplomacy.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Computer Misuse and Cybercrime Act 2003 being amended, to be in line with the Budapest Convention and the African Union Convention on Cybersecurity and Personal Data Protection. The alignment of the Mauritian legislation with these Conventions would serve as a guideline and framework of reference and would further provide law enforcement agencies and the judiciary with a clear understanding of cybercrime and electronic evidence that would lead to efficient investigation and prosecution.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the implementation of the second phase of the e-Prisons project which will comprise the following four new modules –

- (a) Prison Staff Management System;
- (b) Duty Management Information System;
- (c) Baby Management Information System; and
- (d) Prison Training Information System.

7. Cabinet has taken note that the First Session of the Joint Commission between Mauritius and the Republic of Madagascar would be held in Mauritius from 14 to 16 May 2018. The objectives of the Joint Commission are to -

- (a) consolidate bilateral relations between the two countries;
- (b) finalise and sign agreements and pursue discussions on those which are still outstanding;
- (c) promote cooperation in sectors such as agriculture, trade, fisheries, education, research, culture, energy and health, among others; and
- (d) discuss matters pertaining to facilitation of business enterprise in Madagascar.

Various Agreements/Memoranda of Understanding would be signed in the margins of the Ministerial Session. A *Session Interactive avec des Acteurs Economiques de Maurice* would also be held in the margins of the Joint Commission.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the First Meeting of the Mauritius-Reunion Joint Commission would be held in Reunion Island on 2 and 3 May 2018. The objective of the Joint Commission is to give a new momentum to the bilateral relations and raise the profile of cooperation activities undertaken by the two countries.

9. Cabinet has taken note that the International Conference on Information System Design and Intelligent Applications 2018 would be hosted by the Université des Mascareignes from 19 to 21 July 2018. The Conference would be organised in collaboration with Springer, a world known editor in the fields of Science, Technology and Medicine. The main objective of the Conference would be to provide a platform for development in the fields of Computer Science and Information Technology in both theoretical and practical aspects. Some 200 participants are expected to attend the Conference.

10. Cabinet has taken note that the Forum on International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) would be hosted by the Tertiary Education Commission from 02 to 04 May 2018. INQAAHE is a world-wide association of nearly 300 organisations that are active in the quality assurance field in the Higher Education sector. The theme of the Forum is **“Quality is in the Eye of the Beholder: Relevance, Credibility and International Visibility.”** The objectives of the Forum are to provide a constructive platform to examine the fundamentals of quality and its status in the educational domain and to advocate and promote the concept of quality assurance as the driving force for continuous improvement of the Higher Education sector. Some 150 foreign and 65 local participants are expected to attend the Forum.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Gender Equality, Child Development and Family Welfare would organise, on 3 and 4 May 2018, a workshop on strengthening women’s economic empowerment in the Indian Ocean Region, in collaboration with the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). The objectives of the Workshop are, inter alia, to –

- (a) assemble senior gender officials to prepare the Ministerial Conference on Women’s Economic Empowerment scheduled for July 2018;
- (b) identify and share commonalities and capacity building in IORA countries in the field of economic empowerment of women and support the implementation of the IORA Action Plan 2017- 2021;
- (c) contribute to gender equity and equality in the IORA region and integrate women’s economic issues in IORA’s priority and focus areas as cross-cutting issue at the heart of sustainable development; and

- (d) engage with the business community and Chambers of Commerce to develop recommendations on the format and structure of the proposed IORA Women's Business Forum and promotion of the Women's Empowerment Principles.

12. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Arts and Culture would organise the first National Award Ceremony on 16 May 2018 in the context of the celebrations of the 50th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Mauritius. The objective of the National Award is to acknowledge the outstanding contribution of local artists, creators and performers in art forms such as Theatre, Cinema, Visual Arts, Literature, Music and Dance since Independence.

13. Cabinet has taken note of recent developments regarding Brexit. The transitional period has been extended by 21 months, i.e. from 29 March 2019 until the end of 2020. During the extended transitional period, the UK would continue to trade with Mauritius on the same terms and conditions as under the Interim Economic Partnership Agreement.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the findings and recommendations of the Fact Finding Committee set up to look into the circumstances surrounding medical treatment given to babies Crouche and Lallbahadoor at Victoria Hospital. The Fact Finding Committee considered that there is a 'Prima Facie' evidence of negligence leading to the death of baby Crouche and the serious deterioration of the health of baby Lallbahadoor and has thus concluded that the matter be referred to the Police for enquiry. The Fact Finding Committee has also made recommendations to prevent such recurrence. In this connection, a Committee has been set up at the level of the Ministry of Health and Quality of Life to examine these recommendations and ensure implementation thereof.

15. 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 India where she attended the 3rd Governing Council meeting of the World Hindi Secretariat and the launching of the logo and official website of the World Hindi Conference 2018. Various issues were discussed at the level of the Governing Council and the Strategic Plan for the period 2018-2021 was approved. The 4th Meeting of the Governing Council would be held in Mauritius in 2019. The logo and the website of the World Hindi Conference were launched by the Hon Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs of India and the Minister of Education and Human Resources, Tertiary Education and Scientific Research. The website would facilitate on-line registration of participants and also provide relevant information, including hotels and accommodation, entry visa requirements and other facilities available in Mauritius.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the impact of severe tropical storm Fakir on the agricultural sector, namely –

- (a) crops at seedling stage have been affected on an average of 20% to 30% in major crops;
- (b) crops at vegetative stage have been affected at 10% to 15%; and
- (c) as far as cane plantations are concerned, no substantial damage has been sustained.

Cabinet has also taken note that there would be no major disruption in the supply of vegetables on the local market.
