

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 19 APRIL 2024**

1. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Institute of Technical Education and Technology of Mauritius and the Madison Area Technical College, USA. The objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding would be to –

- (a) develop learning experiences that prepare students for the challenges and opportunities of living in a world community and serve the workforce development needs of the respective regions; and
- (b) strengthen, promote and develop co-operation in education, training, development and innovation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

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2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Project Cooperation Agreement between the Ministry of Environment, Solid Waste Management and Climate Change and the United Nations Environment Programme for the preparation of the first Biennial Transparency Report for Mauritius. The project activities would include the preparation of –

- (a) a national inventory of greenhouse gases emissions for the period 2023 to 2024; and
- (b) a national report on progress made in the implementation and achievement of the targets set out in the 2021 Nationally Determined Contributions, information related to climate change impacts and adaptation, levels of financial support, technology development and transfer as well as capacity building support, capacity building needs and areas of improvement.

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3. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of the Letter of Agreement and the Standard Letter of Additional Contribution, between the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Heritage and the UNESCO for the implementation of the UNESCO Culture|2030 indicators, on a pilot basis, in Mauritius. The purpose of the indicators would be to measure and monitor the role and contribution of culture to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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4. Cabinet has taken note of the promulgation of the Optical Council (Registration of Opticians) Regulations 2024 which provide for the prescription of fees to be levied on Opticians.

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5. Cabinet has taken note that the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has upgraded the Royal Consulate General of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in Mauritius into an Embassy. Consequently, as from 18 April 2024, the Royal Embassy of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia was operational in Mauritius.

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6. Cabinet has taken note that on 11 April 2024, US Senators Chris Coons and James Risch introduced, in the Congress, a Bill to re-authorise the African Growth Opportunity Act (AGOA). The Bill aims at requesting the renewal of AGOA for another 16 years till 30 September 2041. At the same time, the new Bill was redefining the eligibility criteria for AGOA. Whereas AGOA was initially meant for Sub-Saharan African countries, the new Bill was now proposing to include all countries that had signed and ratified the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AFCFTA) and met the eligibility criteria.

The new AGOA Bill would provide for the graduation of an eligible country. Accordingly, when a Sub-Saharan country, had graduated to a “high income” level, AGOA would continue to apply to such beneficiary country for a period of five consecutive years, that might be extended for an additional five years, to allow for negotiation of a Free Trade Agreement with the US.

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7. Cabinet has taken note that the Financial Crimes Commission, in collaboration with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Working Group on Bribery and the African Development Bank, would organise the Inaugural Meeting of the Africa Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Network from 23 to 25 April 2024 in Mauritius. The objectives of the meeting would be to –

- (a) equip law enforcement authorities from African jurisdictions with the necessary tools, capacity and expertise to effectively investigate and prosecute complex corruption cases, including those of a transnational nature;
- (b) provide a confidential platform for law enforcement authorities to discuss common challenges and good practices as well as exchange information on specific corruption cases; and
- (c) enhance professional contacts throughout the African region, including with key Working Group on Bribery jurisdictions, investigative units from Multilateral Development Banks as well as other international law enforcement organisations that play a relevant role in the region.

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8. Cabinet has agreed to the National Development Unit and the Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd implementing the construction of drainage network at Verdun project and the construction of flood wall, culverts and river enlargement at La Source, Flacq project, respectively.

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9. Cabinet has taken note that the teledon in favour of the people of Palestine, organised at national level and spearheaded by the Municipal City Council of Port Louis, had been further extended up to 30 April 2024 and the bank accounts of the State Bank of Mauritius (Account Number: 503 0000 118 8017) and the Mauritius Commercial Bank (Account Number: 000 45 20 56 349) would remain open till that date.

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10. Cabinet has taken note that consultants from United Nations Economic Commission for Africa would field a visit to Mauritius from 13 to 16 May 2024 to collect information to feed in the development of an African continental wide database of raw materials and production inputs for the textile/cotton industry in the context of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA).

The objective of having a database at the continental level would be to strengthen the development of regional value chains in the textile/cotton sector in Africa. The database would further assist in identifying opportunities for the development of textile and clothing value chains across Africa and provide policy guidance in optimising the potential of the AfCFTA.

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11. Cabinet has taken note of the rolling out of the Digital Lab on the Go project and the revamping of the Cyber Caravan by the Mauritius Digital Promotion Agency (MDPA). The project aims at digitally empowering citizens by providing a multifaceted approach to harness the full potential of digital technologies. A series of digital awareness initiatives for different target groups, including students, women as well as elderly, that would leverage on new technologies in the cyber caravan, would be conducted by the MDPA. The cyber caravan would be equipped with five booths representing the following new technologies –

- (a) Robotics and Sensors;
- (b) 3D Printing and Fabrication;
- (c) Virtual and Augmented Reality;
- (d) Digital Innovation – Geographic Information Systems & Internet of Things; and
- (e) Digital Government.

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12. Cabinet has taken note of the activities being organised in the context of World Bee Day, celebrated on 20 May every year, to raise awareness on the importance of pollinators and their contribution towards sustainable development. The theme chosen by the United Nations for this year's celebration is "Sustainable Development Goals and Our Buzzing Allies". The following activities would be organised by the Ministry of Agro-Industry and Food Security -

- (a) exhibition and sale of honey and other bee products by beekeepers;
- (b) exhibition on pollination by the Entomology Division;
- (c) demonstration of beekeeping techniques by the Entomology Division;
- (d) sensitisation on pests and diseases of honey bees and their management by the Livestock and Veterinary Division;
- (e) sale of melliferous plants, fruit trees and planting materials by the Horticulture Division, the National Parks and Conservation Services and Forestry Service;
- (f) demonstration of honey analysis by the Agricultural Chemistry Division;
- (g) showcasing of honey-based recipes by the Food Science and Technology Division and the Food and Agricultural Research and Extension Institute (FAREI); and
- (h) display of schemes and facilities provided to beekeepers by the Entomology Division, FAREI and the Small Farmers' Welfare Fund.

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13. Cabinet has taken note of the organisation of activities in the context of World Metrology Day 2024. The theme for this year is 'Sustainability' which marks the official recognition of the 20<sup>th</sup> of May as the World Metrology Day by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. The following activities would, inter alia, be organised by the Ministry of Commerce and Consumer Protection -

- (a) broadcasting of short video clips, covering the main aspects of Legal Metrology, including the legal obligation of traders (calibration/assizing of instrument of mass and volume, verification of packaged goods, among others);
- (b) distribution of flyers/booklets to traders and the public to educate on the importance of using calibrated instrument in trade; and
- (c) radio/TV programmes on specific issues relating to Legal Metrology.

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14. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the Conference on Diabetes, Obesity and Associated Diseases held in January 2024 in Mauritius. The following main topics were discussed during the conduct of the three-day Conference -

- (a) trend and changes in diabetes, epidemiology and new biomarkers for diagnosis of diabetes;
- (b) new primary and secondary prevention and implementation strategies for diabetes as well as novel therapies in the management of diabetes;
- (c) monitoring and management of renal, cardiovascular, eye and neurological complications of diabetes;
- (d) the relationship between diabetes and other co-morbidities;
- (e) trend, prevention and management of obesity as well as its link with diabetes; and
- (f) regional experience in prevention and management of type-2 diabetes.

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15. Cabinet has taken note that, as at 18 April 2024, there were 358 active cases of Dengue Fever in Mauritius, of which 44 had been hospitalised in both public and private hospitals. For Rodrigues, 121 active cases of Dengue Fever had been recorded of which 12 were hospitalised. Reinforced vector control teams were being deployed in hotspot regions for larviciding and fogging.

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16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent official visit of the Minister of Industrial Development, SMEs and Cooperatives to Rodrigues. The Minister had meetings with the Deputy Chief Commissioner and the Commissioner for Agriculture. She also had consultations with the Federations of Cooperative Societies as well as owners of SMEs. Additionally, she had working sessions with the relevant Heads of Departments.

The Minister also attended two functions whereby cheques were remitted to 40 beneficiaries of SME Schemes and certificates were awarded to 46 trainees by SME Mauritius Ltd. The National Cooperative College also held an award ceremony whereby certificates were awarded to 130 persons, who had followed various courses with that institution.

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