

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 19 AUGUST 2022

1. Cabinet has agreed to amendments being brought to the Environment Protection (Banning of Plastic Bags) Regulations 2020 to –

- (a) provide for a moratorium, up to 31 August 2023, for compliance with Regulation 2, by virtue of which a biodegradable or compostable plastic bag should not contain petroleum-based materials or their derivatives; and
- (b) amend the list of standards for biodegradability and compostability of plastic bags under the Third Schedule of the Regulations to include two new standards for home compostability, namely the British standard BS EN 17427 and the Australian standard AS5810.

2. Cabinet has taken note that the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (Republic of Angola) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated. A Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) has been signed between the Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Angola. The DTAA with the Republic of Angola would –

- (a) provide tax certainty to investors of the two countries in their dealings with Mauritius or Angola, as the case may be;
- (b) provide mechanisms to -
 - (i) combat tax evasion and other malpractices through collaboration between the two authorities in terms of exchange of information and lending assistance to each other for the collection of tax due to the concerned tax authority; and
 - (ii) resolve tax disputes that may arise, through a mutual agreement procedure; and
- (c) create a conducive environment for greater investment flows from the Mauritian global business sector to Angola, by providing tax incentives.

3. Cabinet has taken note that the Companies (Payment of Fees to Registrar) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 and the Business Registration (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated. The Companies (Payment of Fees to Registrar) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 would waive the incorporation and

registration by continuation fees payable by companies to the Registrar of Companies, which previously were Rs3,000 for private companies and Rs13,500 for public companies. The registration fee currently at Rs13,500 for setting up a branch of a foreign company would also be waived.

The Business Registration (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 2) Regulations 2022 provides that no fee shall be payable at the time of application for registration by businesses required to be registered under the Business Registration Act. The registration fee payable currently varies between Rs125 and Rs1,500, depending upon the number of persons constituting the workforce of the business.

4. Cabinet has taken note that the Meat (Abattoir) (Amendment) Regulations 2022 would be promulgated to increase slaughter and transport fees for all the categories of animals slaughtered at the abattoir as approved by the Board of the Mauritius Meat Authority. The slaughter and transport fees have not been revised since 2017.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Road Development Authority constructing bicycle lanes along the following road projects which are being implemented -

- (a) La Vigie - La Brasserie - Beaux Songes Link Road (Phase I);
- (b) La Vigie - La Brasserie - Beaux Songes Link Road (Phase II);
- (c) Verdun Bypass; and
- (d) Grade Separated Junction to link the Verdun Bypass and the St Pierre Bypass.

6. Cabinet has taken note that tenders for construction works in regard to the 12,000 residential units project were being launched in a phased manner by the New Social Living Development Ltd. Tenders for construction works in respect of the project would be open to –

- (a) eligible local contractors;
- (b) joint ventures of local contractors; and
- (c) joint ventures of local and foreign contractors.

7. Cabinet has agreed to the setting up of a Technical Committee to assess applications for development in and around the Buffer Zone of Le Morne Cultural Landscape.

8. Cabinet has taken note that a Survey on Drug Use in Rodrigues would be conducted in September and October 2022 by the National Drug Secretariat. The Survey which is being conducted for the first time in Rodrigues, is in line with the recommendations of the Commission of Inquiry on Drug Trafficking. The main objectives of the Survey are to -

- (a) measure the prevalence of drug use among the general population;
- (b) set a baseline for monitoring the drug use situation in the island; and
- (c) develop appropriate strategies and programmes in order to minimise the drug threat in Rodrigues.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the events which would be organised by the Ministry of Social Integration, Social Security and National Solidarity in the context of the International Day of Older Persons on Saturday 01 October 2022. The theme chosen by the United Nations for this Day is "The Resilience and Contributions of Older Women". A national event would be held at the Trianon Convention Centre for elderly persons from all over the island.

A Conference on the theme "Setting up a Health Ageing Task Force for Mauritius" in collaboration with the "*Fédération Internationale des Associations de Personnes Agées*" (FIAPA) and the "Commonwealth Association for the Ageing" (CommonAge) would also be held on Monday 03 October 2022 at Lady Sushil Ramgoolam Recreation Centre, Pointe aux Piments. The Senior Citizens Council would also be organising a series of activities around the island, including Rodrigues, during the month of October 2022.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the visit of two representatives of the *Fédération Internationale de Football Association* (FIFA) to Mauritius. They had working sessions with officers of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Recreation and those of the Registrar of Associations. The delegation of FIFA would submit their recommendations in due course.

11. Cabinet has taken note that during the Inaugural Regional Steering Committee (ReSCO) Meeting for the Eastern Africa Regional Coordinating Centers of Ministers of Health held in August 2022 in Tanzania, Mauritius has been elected unanimously the Vice-Chair of the Regional Steering Committee.

The Regional Coordinating Centers are in integral part of Africa CDC that were established as a collaborative platform to support the execution of Africa CDC's plan in the regions and closely provide technical support to the Member States based on need.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the situation of the COVID-19 pandemic prevailing across the world. Some 598.3 million cases have been reported globally, of which 572.3 million persons have been successfully treated. With regard to Mauritius, as at 17 August 2022, there were 120 active cases of COVID-19, out of which 27 were admitted at the New ENT Hospital. Over the period 11 to 17 August 2022, one death was attributed to COVID-19.

Cabinet has also taken note that the Sanitary Protocol for Agalega has been reviewed and the quarantine requirement has been waived off.

13. Cabinet has taken note that the Ministry of Health and Wellness has devised a Protocol for Monkeypox at the Airport and Seaport. No suspected case of Monkeypox has been reported during the past week in Mauritius. The Ministry of Health and Wellness has already ordered Monkeypox vaccines.

14. Cabinet has taken note that the *Université des Mascareignes* would host the 19th International Conference on Corporate Social Responsibility and the 10th Organisational Governance Conference from 07 to 10 September 2022 in Mauritius. These events are being organised in collaboration with the Social Responsibility Research Network (SRRNet) which promotes activities related to the social contract of corporate organisations. The conferences would –

- (a) provide a broad and multi-disciplinary platform for academics, researchers, industry and business professionals, NGOs, Government officials and consultants working in areas of Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability and Corporate Governance to exchange and share insights on the management of business during periods of major and unforeseen disruptions, such as the COVID-19 pandemic ; and
- (b) concentrate on the economic and social impacts of COVID-19 on social responsibility, ethics and firm sustainability, with a particular focus on issues of corporate finance, corporate governance and education.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the virtual participation of the Minister of Land Transport and Light Rail, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade in the SADC Council of Ministers held recently in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The interventions at the SADC Council of Ministers focused, inter alia, on the following main issues -

- (a) status of finances;
- (b) the candidatures for membership of the Council of the International Telecommunication Union for the term 2023-2026;
- (c) the SADC Administrative Tribunal;
- (d) the recruitment of the Deputy Executive Secretary for Regional Integration and Director of Organ;
- (e) the SADC Standby Force Regional Logistic Depot; and
- (f) the transformation of the SADC Parliamentary Forum into Parliament.

16. Cabinet has take note of the proposed official visit of HE Ms Chileshe Kapwepwe, Secretary General of COMESA to Mauritius from 22 to 24 August 2022. The purpose of her mission is to, inter alia, discuss the implementation of COMESA programmes and activities.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the National Cooperative College Council with Mr Hurrydeo Boodhoo as part-time Chairperson.
