

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 23 AUGUST 2024

1. Cabinet has taken note that the following regulations would be promulgated –
 - (a) Customs (Amendment No. 2) Regulations 2024;
 - (b) Excise (Amendment) Regulations 2024;
 - (c) Excise (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 3) Regulations 2024; and
 - (d) Customs Tariff (Amendment of Schedule) (No. 3) Regulations 2024.

The Regulations would provide for the implementation of measures mentioned in the Annex to the Budget Speech 2024-25 relating to revenue laws as well as other policy and technical measures.

2. Cabinet has agreed to Mauritius signing the Charter of the Colombo Security Conclave and the Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of its Secretariat in Colombo, Sri Lanka.

The Charter defines the functioning and responsibilities of the Colombo Security Conclave by establishing the fundamental principles to be observed by Member States including non-interference on internal affairs of States, respect of sovereignty, territorial integrity, financial and administrative responsibilities of Member States. The Memorandum of Understanding would establish a Secretariat for the Conclave which would coordinate, service, disseminate and monitor the implementation of policy decisions of the Council of National Security Advisers.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development signing a letter formalising Mauritius' adherence to the OECD Declaration on International Investment and Multinational Enterprises.

Adherence to the Investment Declaration would demarcate Mauritius by being the first Sub-Saharan country in Africa to adhere to that Declaration. The Declaration, being one of the most important OECD Instrument which all OECD members and candidates have to abide to, would bring the following benefits –

- (a) improved transparency of investment regimes which would give comfort to both domestic and foreign investors;
- (b) entitlement to participate along with other adherent countries and the European Commission in the work of the OECD Investment Committee;

- (c) taking advantage of the OECD diagnosis and benchmarking exercises in the course of the review process of the investment climate of Mauritius; and
- (d) improved access to global supply chains.

4. Cabinet has taken note that a committee on Mpox had been set up at the level of the Ministry of Health and Wellness to monitor the evolution of the disease across the world. In addition, the committee would ensure that the measures put in place for surveillance at points of entry, namely the Port and Airport, had been reinforced. The existing Protocol on Mpox had also been reviewed which would provide for, inter alia, the following -

- (a) with respect to any suspected case at the Airport, a Rapid Response Team would assess and take charge of the affected person following which he/she would be transferred to an identified isolation room in a hospital; and
- (b) as per the protocol, the patient would be under the care of a physician and dermatologist of that hospital.

5. Cabinet has taken note that the Family Planning Guidelines for Service Providers 2024 would be launched in the context of World Sexual Health Day 2024 which is celebrated annually in September to raise awareness on the importance of sexual health and promote the need to make sexual health a global priority. The theme for World Sexual Health Day 2024 is “Positive Relationships”.

The launching of the Guidelines would be followed by a workshop on Sexual Health, Family Planning and Positive Relationships. The workshop would target health professionals, representatives from the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare, the Police Department and NGOs. The following activities would also be organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness to promote good sexual and reproductive health –

- (a) dissemination workshops on the updated Guidelines on Family Planning in regional hospitals;
- (b) community sessions and canvassing by Community Health Care Officers; and
- (c) radio and TV programmes to create awareness on sexual health.

6. Cabinet has taken note of the holding of a capacity building workshop, organised by the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family Welfare in collaboration with the Southern African Development Community from 27 to 30 August 2024 in Mauritius to assist in the development of a National Action Plan to ensure proper implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda in line with the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325.

The main objectives of the workshop would be to share experiences, strategies and practices on the implementation of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda and the formulation of a National Action Plan to enable the development of concrete indicators to identify priorities, determine responsibilities, allocate resources and initiate and monitor strategic actions within defined timed frame.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Use Planning, Minister of Tourism in the 44th Summit of the SADC Heads of State and Government held in Harare, Zimbabwe. The Summit elected HE Dr Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa, President of the Republic of Zimbabwe, as SADC Chairperson and HE Dr (Mrs) Samia Suluhu Hassan, President of the United Republic of Tanzania as Chairperson of the SADC Organ on Politics, Defence and Security Co-operation.

The Deputy Prime Minister led the Mauritius delegation to the Summit where the following issues were, inter alia, considered –

- (a) the SADC Declaration on the Protection of People with Albinism (PPWA)/SADC legal instruments were signed by Mauritius and other Member States. The PPWA seeks to condemn all forms of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against albino people;
- (b) the Council of Ministers endorsed the appointment of Mauritius as Deputy Chairperson of the SADC Finance Sub Committee for the financial year 2024/25. Mauritius would therefore chair the Finance Committee as from next year. Mauritius was appointed as member of the SADC Board of Auditors for a three-year term 2024-2027;
- (c) Mauritius expressed the gratitude of Government to the SADC Secretariat for providing technical assistance to implement the food fortification programme and for facilitating the pool procurement of fertilisers; and
- (d) the Council of Ministers adopted the Safety, Mobility, Automated, Real-time Traffic Management Integrated Economic Corridors as a framework to enhance regional integration. The project was initially planned to link the SADC landlocked Member States. Following the intervention of Mauritius, Council of Ministers agreed that a Maritime Corridor be developed and be complementary to the Indian Ocean Commission Maritime Connectivity Strategy and the COMESA proposed Shipping Line for the Indian Ocean Island States.

8. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent participation of the Minister of Financial Services and Good Governance in the promotional mission organised with the collaboration of the Economic Development Board and the Financial Services Commission pertaining to financial services in India.

The purpose of the mission to India was to pursue the momentum which was created during the previous missions to India with a view to enhancing the visibility of Mauritius as a preferred International Financial Centre and also to reconnect with the regulatory stakeholders in India.

The Minister inaugurated the opening of the 7th Edition of Elektrotec 2024, in Coimbatore which is one of the most known fairs for renewable energy, electronic vehicle and innovation in India, organised by the Coimbatore District Small Industries Association. He had meeting with, inter alia, members of the Indian Economic Trade Organization in Chennai on strengthening the relationship with Mauritius to access the African market.

9. Cabinet has taken note of the appointment of Mr Yashley Reesaul, as President of the Conciliation Service for the Public Service under the Employment Relations Act.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Seafarers' Welfare Fund Board for a period of two years, with Mr Doorjodhanlall Salandy as part-time Chairperson.
