

HIGHLIGHTS OF CABINET MEETING – FRIDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2023

1. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Financial Services and Good Governance signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in order to secure, inter alia, technical support for the development of a National Fintech Strategy for Mauritius.

The scope of work for the development of the Strategy would cover, among others, the following activities -

- (a) an assessment of the current level of Fintech penetration, Fintech adoption and digital maturity, both at corporate and consumer levels; and
- (b) a marketing strategy to promote Mauritius as a leading Fintech Hub and which should include an incentive package, both financial and non-financial, to attract companies and start-ups to set up in the Mauritius Fintech Hub to serve both Mauritius and Africa.

2. Cabinet has agreed to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Road Development Authority and the Korea Expressway Corporation of the Republic of South Korea, with a view to enhancing collaboration in the field of road infrastructural projects.

The Memorandum of Understanding, which would be valid for a period of five years, would provide, inter alia, for the following -

- (a) enhancing partnership in the field of road infrastructure, including cooperation in the implementation of future projects; and
- (b) exchange of information and knowledge related to road infrastructure, bridge maintenance and traffic management in support for closer economic development.

3. Cabinet has agreed to the *Prime à l'Emploi* Scheme being reviewed so as to –

- (a) reduce the minimum unemployment period for a person to qualify under the scheme from one year to three months;
- (b) require an employer who lays off an employee to wait at least three months prior to making an application under the scheme; and
- (c) make the scheme applicable to an employee who is 62 years or below.

4. Cabinet has taken note of the recent virtual participation of the Prime Minister in a G20 Leaders' Summit which was held under the chairmanship of HE Shri Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of the Republic of India. The Meeting focused on taking forward initiatives announced during the New Delhi G20 Leaders' Summit held in September this year, and was attended by all G20 Member States, the President of Comoros in his capacity as Chairperson of the African Union, and other Guest countries including Mauritius as well as the UN Secretary General.

The Prime Minister intervened during the Summit and, inter alia, expressed gratitude that the concerns of SIDS countries on vulnerability and climate change found resonance in the New Delhi G20 Leaders' Declaration.

5. Cabinet has agreed to the Ministry of Housing and Land Use Planning extending the time frame of the current National Development Strategy for a further period of one year ending December 2024. Thereafter, that Ministry would invite the President of the Republic to approve the extension of the operative date of the Municipal and District Council Outline Planning Schemes to December 2024.

6. Cabinet has agreed to the National Development Unit and the Drains Infrastructure Construction Ltd implementing several projects, two of which would be under the National Flood Management Programme. The following projects would be implemented –

- (a) construction of cut-off drain at Morcellement Splendid View, Albion;
- (b) flood mitigation measures at Canal Alliman, Vacoas, as Phase 2A;
- (c) construction of drain and resurfacing of Tagore/Anthurium/Andreanum Streets, St Louis, Pailles;
- (d) flood mitigation measures in the region of Plaine Magnien as Phase 1A;
- (e) construction of a retaining wall at Ruisseau Delices, Petit Bel Air;
- (f) construction of Jadoo Bridge, Congomah;
- (g) construction of drains and culverts at Kestrel Lane, Terre Rouge (Phase 2); and
- (h) flood mitigating measures at Debarcadère, Poste de Flacq.

7. Cabinet has taken note of the findings of the National Drug Observatory (NDO) Report for the year 2022 which has been prepared by the National Drug Secretariat of the Prime Minister's Office. The main objectives of the NDO Report are to monitor and assess the drug situation in the country as well as provide up-to-date and credible data to enable relevant authorities to respond proactively, efficiently and in a timely manner to the drug issue.

The Report covers drug-related issues such as the trends and patterns of drug offence, health effects, health programmatic response as well as rehabilitative treatment. The NDO Report 2022 would be uploaded on the website of the Prime Minister's Office.

8. Cabinet has taken note that the Drug Users Administrative Panel has been constituted with Hon Abdurafeek Hamuth, former Puisne Judge, as Chairperson.

9. Cabinet has taken note that Mauritius had been ranked 23rd in the 2023 Global Peace Index in its 17th edition and 1st in the Sub-Saharan Africa region. Each year, the Institute for Economics and Peace, an international think tank, releases the Global Peace Index. The Global Peace Index covers 163 countries, comprising 99.7 percent of the world's population and measures the state of peace across three domains, namely the level of Societal Safety and Security; the extent of Ongoing Domestic and International Conflict; and the degree of Militarisation. In 2022, Mauritius was ranked 28th by the Global Peace Index and 1st in the Sub-Saharan Africa region.

10. Cabinet has taken note of the general preparedness measures and work arrangements which Ministries/Departments/local authorities and parastatal bodies would have to comply with, in case of heavy rain, torrential rain and cyclone warnings, for the Summer Season 2023-2024.

11. Cabinet has taken note that the Mega Blood Donation 2023 would be organised by the Ministry of Health and Wellness in collaboration with the Blood Donors Association, from Monday 18 December to Thursday 21 December 2023 on the premises of the Municipal City Council of Port Louis and *La Rue du Vieux Conseil*.

The objectives of the Mega Blood Donation event would be to -

- (a) cope with the continuous demand for blood and blood components during the festive months of December and January;

- (b) raise awareness among the population on the importance of blood donation and ensure an adequate pool of blood donors; and
- (c) encourage networking among other Non-Governmental Organisations for the organisation of blood donation activities during the whole year.

12. Cabinet has taken note of the performance of the Export-Oriented Enterprises (EOE) Sector over the period January to September 2023, as compared to the corresponding period in 2022. The EOE Sector remains the driving force of the manufacturing industry, contributing to around 60 percent of total exports. Export of goods such as Fish and Fish Preparation products, Medical Devices, Watches and Clocks all registered an increase for the period January to September 2023, compared to the corresponding period in 2022.

13. Cabinet has taken note of the achievements and progress made by SME Mauritius Ltd over the past years in relation to support schemes and training programmes. Since January 2018 to date, 3,007 SMEs had been supported with grants amounting to Rs125.5 million, through the implementation of the different schemes of SME Mauritius Ltd. These beneficiaries had a cumulative turnover of Rs7.4 billion and provided employment to some 10,607 people.

14. Cabinet has taken note of the nomination of the Competition Commission as Chair of the Steering Committee of the African Competition Forum and as co-Chair of the International Competition Network's Merger Working Group.

These nominations underscore the commitment of the Competition Commission to shaping and developing regional, continental, and international policies on competition matters, including merger regimes and would also provide an expanded platform for the Competition Commission to collaborate on and advocate for adopting best practices concerning competition law and policies.

15. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Housing and Land Use Planning, Minister of Tourism to Samoa, where he participated in the Special Session of the Organisation of African, Caribbean and Pacific States (OACPS) Council of Ministers and the 46th meeting of the OACPS and the European Union (OACPS-EU) Council of Ministers.

During his mission, the OACPS-EU Partnership Agreement, which would henceforth be known as the ‘Samoa Agreement’, was signed by the Deputy Prime Minister on behalf of the Republic of Mauritius. This Agreement marks the transition from the Cotonou Partnership Agreement and will serve as the main instrument to guide the political, economic and development cooperation relations between the European Union (EU), comprising 27 Member States, and the OACPS, comprising 79 countries, over the next 20 years. The Deputy Prime Minister also had meetings with the Prime Minister of Samoa, several African Ministers and the EU Commissioner for International Partnerships.

16. Cabinet has taken note of the outcome of the recent mission of the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development to France, where he participated in the OECD Emerging Market Network Business Meeting on Africa and the 22nd International Economic Forum on Africa.

In the margins of the events, the Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Development had a meeting with Mr Mathias Cormann, Secretary General, OECD. He also had a working session with Mrs Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir, Director of the OECD Development Centre as well as Mr Albert Muchanga, Commissioner for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Minerals of the African Union Commission.

17. Cabinet has taken note of the reconstitution of the Board of Trustees of *La Clinique Mauricienne* for the year 2024.
