



RODRIGUES REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

Executive Council

PRESS RELEASE

The Executive Council met at 10.00 hours this Friday 15 January 2010 under the chairmanship of the Chief Commissioner, Mr. J. ROUSSETY, G.O.S.K and has, among its deliberations:

DECIDED:

- (i) to set up a "Fonds de Solidarité" in favour of the victims of the earthquake in Haiti. Public servants, schools, private firms and the public will be invited to contribute to the Fund and collection boxes will be placed in government offices and the airport for that purpose by next week.
- (ii) to approve the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Mauritius Ports Authority and the Commission for Marine Services of the Rodrigues Regional Assembly for the overall management of the port and marine activities in Port Mathurin.
- (iii) to set up a Flying Squad within the Fisheries Protection Service to prevent and deter illegal fishing through effective intelligence work, patrols at sea and along the coast both during the day and night, and inspections of markets, cold storages, supermarkets, street vendors, sales points and fish landing stations.
- (iv) to approve the proposal of SEHDA to display and sell local Rodriguan products in the Astrolabe shop at Port Louis Waterfront on a cost-sharing basis with the Commission for Industrial Development and Handicraft. The selling of Rodriguan products in the Astrolabe shop will represent a useful channel for local artisans to display, market and sell their products in this highly popular visiting place for tourists and buyers in Mauritius. A local Procurement Committee in Rodrigues will be set up to accept, screen and select products manufactured by local entrepreneurs and artisans and selected items would be procured by SEHDA on consignment in the first instance and thereafter on a cash basis.

TAKEN NOTE

- (i) that the Araucaria Community Government School has been opened on 12 January 2010 with a cohort of 164 pupils. The school is running six sections for classes from Std I to Std IV for pupils from the catchment area of Mont Lubin, Citronelle, Cyganges, Araucaria, Champs/Deux Goyaves and Malabar.
- (ii) that the Acting Director of Meteorological Services (Mauritius) will conduct two half day training sessions for trainers in Rodrigues as from 25 January 2010 whereby 30 participants from the police force, the National Coast Guard services, the Meteorological Services, Rodrigues Council of Social Services and youth leaders will follow sessions on tsunamis, earthquakes in the Mid Indian Ocean Ridge and other natural disasters and the precautions to be taken. The participants will subsequently transfer the learning to their respective teams and to the population at large in the context of the Tsunami Awareness Campaign.
- (iii) of the progress achieved in the project of construction of toilet blocks for 36 and 55 beneficiaries of housing units of region 1 and region 3 respectively, which is financed by the Trust Fund for the Social Integration of Vulnerable Groups. Works have been completed for some 75% of beneficiaries.
- (iv) of the measures being taken by the Commission for Water Resources for the reparation of one of the two desalination plants situated at Songes and for the organization of a one week-intensive training in Rodrigues for technicians of the Rodrigues Water Company Ltd on the operation and maintenance of the desalination plants.
- (v) that the statistics in the tourism sector show a decrease in tourist arrivals from 41,136 in 2008 to 40,350 in 2009, thus representing a decrease of 1.9%. The major reduction in the number of tourists who visited Rodrigues in 2009 has been recorded from Mauritius with a decrease of 6.8%. On the other hand, arrivals from Reunion/France have increased by 10.5% in 2009 compared to 2008. The decrease which was around 15% in the first eight months of 2009 has been curtailed to 1.9% over the year 2009 with the implementation of the "Special Holiday Package" for tourists from Mauritius as from September 2009.

TAKEN NOTE

- (vi) of the award of a cash prize of Rs 20,000 to judoka Christianne Legentil of Marechal by the Commission for Youth and Sports for her excellent performance in the Commonwealth Judo Championship held from 8 to 13 January 2010 in Singapore where she won a gold medal in the category Junior and a bronze medal in the category Senior. Miss Legentil will be also provided financial assistance of Rs 5,000 monthly until the next Indian Ocean Island Games. Mr Antonio Felicite, Coach of Miss Legentil, will also be awarded a cash prize of Rs 15,000.
- (vii) of the activities to be organized to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of the Abolition of Slavery which will be celebrated on 1st February 2010, viz:-
- (a) laying of wreaths to be organized at L'Union "Lieu de Mémoire" at 14.00 hrs on 1st February 2010 followed by a cultural show as from 17.00 hrs;
 - (b) distribution of an information leaflet on Slavery; and
 - (c) workshops to disseminate information on the objective and functions of the Truth and Justice Commission;
- (viii) that the Commission for Social Security, Women's Affairs, Child Development and Family Welfare has secured financing under the Women and Children's Solidarity Programme of the Prime Minister's Office for the implementation in collaboration with local NGO's of the following three projects in Rodrigues for an amount of Rs 2,016,511:-
- a) "Upgrading of facilities at the Day Care Centre" to be implemented through the Rodrigues Association for the Disabled to the tune of Rs 468,250;
 - b) "Enhancing the capacity of 'Befrienders Rodrigues Association' in preventing self-inflicted violence and death of children and women" to be implemented through the Rodrigues Regional Women's Committee to the tune of Rs 814,120;
 - c) "Projet de Développement Socio-éducatif" à Corail, Rodrigues et mise sur pied du Centre D'Education Permanente 'Zenfants Corail to be implemented through the Association pour le Bien Être des Rodriguais and the Association Zenfants l'Espoir de L'Ile Rodrigues to the tune of Rs 734,141.

TAKEN NOTE

(ix) of the outcome of the mission organized by the RECOMAP to Tuléar, Madagascar of a delegation led by the Chief Commissioner from 25 to 29 November 2009 where they assessed the potential of introducing ranching sea cucumber particularly the *Holothuria Scabra* in Rodrigues and the benefits of introducing close season for octopus fishing. The delegation has also been able to:

- Visit the Institut Halieutique des Sciences Marines (IHSM) and its sea cucumber nursery facilities as well as the site for pre-fattening of juvenile sea cucumber;
- Visit the farm of a fisher where fattening of sea cucumber was being carried out;
- Assist to two presentations of NGO's working with villagers on techniques of sea cucumber ranching;
- Agree for an expert from Madagascar *Holothurie* company to come to Rodrigues in February 2010 to assess the potential of the lagoon of Rodrigues and to carry out sites selection for trials.

Central Administration Office
Port Mathurin
RODRIGUES

Date: 15 January 2010