

CABINET AGENDA ISSUES – 18 SEPTEMBER 2017

The House is asked to note the following matters which were considered by the Cabinet at its meeting held on 18 September 2017:

1. Contract;
2. Legislation;
3. Annual Reports;
4. Approval of the Updated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Entrepreneurship Policy and Implementation Plan;
5. Activities of the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) for the Reporting Period April 2016 – March 2017;
6. Merger of the Human Employment and Resource Training Trust/National Training Agency (HEART Trust/NTA), Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL), the National Youth Service Board (NYS) and the Apprenticeship Board; and
7. Reports.

Each matter shall be elaborated on in turn.

1. Contract

Building and Infrastructure Works for the Ruthven Road Housing Development – Phase 1, St. Andrew

Cabinet approved the award of a contract to M&M Jamaica Limited in the amount of \$832,464,731.47 to undertake building and infrastructure works for the Ruthven Road Housing Development – Phase 1, in St. Andrew.

The Ruthven Road Housing Development is a National Housing Trust (NHT) project and will take place at lands situated at 1-3 Ruthven Road, Kingston 10. An agreement for the transfer of the land was signed by the Jamaica Constabulary Force (JCF), Ministry of National Security, the Commissioner of Lands and the then Ministry of Housing, with the NHT.

2. Legislation

The International Business Companies Act, 2017

Cabinet gave approval for the Bill entitled “The International Business Companies Act, 2017” to be tabled in the Houses of Parliament.

The Bill seeks to provide for and restrict the permitted operations in Jamaica of international business companies, separate and distinct from companies created under the Companies Act.

3. Annual Reports

Cabinet considered Annual Reports of the:

- (i) Broadcasting Commission for the Financial Year 2016/2017;
- (ii) Jamaica Bauxite Mining Limited for the Financial Year 2014/2015 and 2015/2016; and

(iii) University Council of Jamaica for the Financial Year 2016/2017.

The Reports will be tabled in Parliament at a later date.

4. Approval of the Updated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME) and Entrepreneurship Policy and Implementation Plan

Cabinet approved the updated Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and Entrepreneurship (MSME) Policy and Implementation Plan 2017 as a Green Paper.

This updated MSME Policy and Implementation Plan is the result of a review of the existing policy approved by Cabinet in August 2016. The revised Policy reflected those changes which had impacted the MSME sector in Jamaica since 2013, including new laws, policies, strategies and international agreements.

5. Activities of the National Task Force Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) for the Reporting Period April 2016 – March 2017

Cabinet approved the Report on the activities of the National Taskforce Against Trafficking in Persons (NATFATIP) for the reporting period 1 April to 31 March 2017, and submission of the Report to the United States Department of State.

Each year, the Government of Jamaica reports to the United States Department of State on the activities undertaken to prosecute offenders, protect victims of human trafficking, and preventing the commission of human trafficking offences. The United States Department of State in its 2016 Annual Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, had upgraded Jamaica from a Tier 2 WatchList in 2015/2016 to a Tier 2 ranking for the 2016/2017 financial year. This upgrade meant that the Government of Jamaica was making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking.

The current Report covers the Financial Year 2016/2017 and highlights activities undertaken to prosecute offenders, protect victims of human trafficking, and prevent the commission of human trafficking offences.

6. Merger of the Human Employment and Resource Training Trust/National Training Agency (HEART Trust/NTA), Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL), the National Youth Service Board (NYS) and the Apprenticeship Board

Cabinet approved the implementation of the merger of the Jamaican Foundation for Lifelong Learning (JFLL), the National Youth Service Board (NYS) and the Apprenticeship Board with the Human Employment and Resource Training Trust/National Training Agency (HEART Trust/NTA).

This merger forms a part of the larger Government of Jamaica Rationalisation of the Public Sector Action Plan which was approved by Cabinet in September 2016. These entities were selected for merger due to the current duplication in training delivery and overlap in the purpose and function of the entities, and the benefits to be gained by subsuming the entities under the HEART Trust/NTA.

7. Reports

- (i) United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Grant for Safety and Security
Cabinet considered a report from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information regarding grant funding from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID).

The report advised that the Ministry had partnered with the USAID through a project entitled "Partnership for the Improved Safety and Security in Schools", for utilisation of a grant of US\$3 million to undertake several initiatives centred on the reduction of anti-social and violent behaviour among youths, both in and out of school, and the transformation of schools and their immediate surroundings into safe zones to facilitate a quality education system. The project would build on interventions arising from the report of the Education Task Force 2004, the establishment of the National Parenting Support Commission (NSPC), and the implementation of the Safe Schools Policy, 2004.

- (ii) The Review of the Executive Agency Model

Cabinet considered a report from the Office of the Cabinet, which provided the findings of a review of the Executive Agency Model undertaken by the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service.

The report recalled the decision of Cabinet which approved the creation of Executive Agencies and the drafting of the Executive Agencies Act, 2002, and that 12 Executive Agencies had been created since 1999.

The report outlined the review process and provided a summary of the findings, advising that the Executive Agency model in Jamaica had only been partially successful. The report advised that the Ministry of Finance and the Public Service would table submissions in Cabinet with specific recommendations to facilitate improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of the Executive Agency Model.

- (iii) Findings of the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), 2015

Cabinet considered a report from the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation regarding the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), 2015.

The report informed that the JSLC was a living standards measurement survey that enabled the monitoring of Jamaica's developmental progress on a broad range of social indicators, and the survey had been conducted each year since 1988, except for 2011. It further informed of significant findings of the JSLC in 2015 in relation to the indicators of consumption and poverty, demographic characteristics, health, education, housing, and the Programme of Advancement Through Health and Education (PATH).

- (iv) The Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), 2013 and 2014: Policy Implications

Cabinet considered a report from the Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation in connection with the Jamaica Survey of Living Conditions (JSLC), 2013 and 2014 and related policy implications.

The report advised that the JSLC was an annual production of the Planning Institute of Jamaica (PIOJ) and the Statistical Institute of Jamaica (STATIN), based on an annual survey conducted by STATIN. The most pressing issues from the 2013 and 2014 surveys had been identified, and should be included in the decision-making processes for policies, plans and programmes, and included findings concerning household consumption and poverty, the link between agriculture and rural poverty, social protection, the ageing of the population, urbanisation, education, and housing conditions.

(v) Values and Attitudes Programme

Cabinet considered a report from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Information in connection with the Values and Attitudes Programme.

The report advised of the impending launch of the Values and Attitudes campaign to ensure its roll out in the new school year; and signalled the intent to promote expected behaviour beginning with young people.

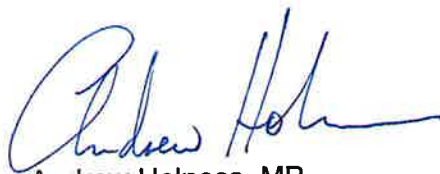
The report outlined the organisational framework, core values to be promoted, the draft Strategic Plan for the Programme, as well as the main considerations with respect to the operationalisation of the Programme and Strategic Plan.

(vi) Natural Gas Pilot Project for State Owned Buses

Cabinet considered a report from the Ministry of Transport and Mining regarding a Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) Pilot Project for state-owned buses.

The report informed of the intention of the Ministry of Transport and Mining to implement an effective energy-efficient public transport system in response to the need to pursue less expensive and cleaner alternatives to diesel and gasoline fuel. It further informed that the Jamaica Urban Transit Company Limited (JUTC), through the Ministry, had commenced the process of undertaking pre-feasibility assessments on fuel options, such as natural gas, for the company's fleet, with the objective of defining the most viable route to achieving greater cost reductions and operational efficiencies.

The Honourable House is asked to note the foregoing.



Andrew Holness, MP
Prime Minister

1 November 2017