

Project to modernise Port Victoria gets the green light By Patrick Joubert |28 May 2021



Once completed, the project to rehabilitate and extend Port Victoria, which is expected to start in June 2022, will help bring down the cost of living among other socio-economic gains.

The Minister for Transport, Antony Derjacques, made the statement at a press conference yesterday afternoon at the Mahé Quay following cabinet’s unanimous approval of the revised project during a virtual meeting chaired by President Wavel Ramkalawan on Wednesday this week.

Present during the press conference were the principal secretary in the department of Civil Aviation, Ports and Marine, Alan Renaud; the chief executive of the Seychelles Ports Authority (SPA), Ronny Brutus; the chairman of SPA, Gilbert Frichot; other board members and staff of SPA.

“When we finish with the more effective and modernised port whereby the ships will spend less time to unload their containers, there will be less fees and charges which are going to be beneficial to the consumers. We want the cost of living to go down along with the creation of more economic development,” the minister said, noting that the aim is to create an effective and modern port to meet our economic needs.

The project to create a total quay length of 600 metres for significant berthing space, among other adequate storing space and modernised facilities, will be done in three phases. The port

will have a seaward extension offset of 10m instead of the initial 40m when the project was first initiated in 2015.

Phase 1 and 2 will take between two to two and a half years to be completed with phase 1 starting by June 2022. Phase 1 will comprise the construction in the south of a quay wall of 300m and with dredging depth of 13.5m while phase 2 will be implemented immediately upon completion of phase 1 with the construction of another 300m of quay wall. Both phases 1 and 2 will cost €60 million.

Phase 3, which will be a public private partnership project, is in conception phase and will consist of an additional extension by 400m southward from phase 1 towards the Queenie Bay at the ex Seychelles Coast Guard which will also include dredging the basin and approach channel to 16.5m in depth. It will be done a few years after phases 1 and 2.

All phases of the project will be tendered out locally and internationally based on international tender norms and best practices.

For the project, especially for phase 1 and 2, which was first conceptualised in 2001, SPA has for now secured a loan of €29 million comprising €16.5 from *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) and €12.5 million from the European Investment Bank (EIB). Furthermore, the European Union has also granted €5 million towards the expansion of Port Victoria and a further €2 million for consultancy.

In line with the redevelopment of the port, the SPA head office inside the port is expected to be relocated in a new building to be built at the site housing the Island Development Company (IDC). IDC will vacate the area by December 2021 to its new headquarters at Ile Du Port to make way for the construction of the new SPA headquarters.

Addressing all present, Minister Derjacques said the vision for Port Victoria is to be able to handle gearless vessels service by mobile harbour cranes and/ or rubber tire gantry cranes thus creating faster turnaround in terms of container handling.

Minister Derjacques noted that Port Victoria is the gateway to the Seychelles socio-economy through which 95% of all that we import and consume daily passes.

He noted that following the commissioning of the La Gogue dam, the next major and main infrastructural project is no other than Port Victoria's rehabilitation and extension.

“Our port was commissioned more than 40 years ago on October 6, 1973 and the timing is more than perfect to venture into modernising our port. Without our only vital and modern port coming into action, the economy cannot grow. In line with redevelopment and economic development, it is necessary that we do construct, extend and modernize Port Victoria,” the minister added.

He stated that while there will be negotiations to introduce other operators in the port in the future, the Land Marine Company Limited, the sole operator in Port Victoria at the moment, will receive an extension to carry out its work until phase 1 is completed. He also stated that in order to carry out the project and to pay out the loan, SPA will have to look at streams of money necessary and to negotiate with the operators on harbour dues regulations and to

relook and amend its various applicable fees for the movement of goods and containers in the port, including the rates applicable in terms of rental of properties.

On behalf of the government of Seychelles and the Ministry of Transport, Minister Derjacques express his thanks to the banks and the European Union for helping the SPA with the project.

“Finally Seychelles can look forward to a modern and extended port,” he added, noting that in the case of an international contractor winning the bid, the ministry will try as much as possible to make available local sub contracts while it will also ensure that the successful contractor employ a certain number of Seychellois workers.

For his part, Mr Frichot said the project will bring Seychelles’ port a step closer to being respected and recognised to follow the international norms which was lacking while CEO Brutus said that SPA staff will be given necessary training in line with the port’s development.

He later said that the cruise ships will also use the new port extensions while a special berth for cruise ships will be constructed further north in the future.

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& Extension Project



Port Victoria Rehabilitation

