

INDIA

Statement by External Affairs Minister at the 12th Council of Ministers' Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) November 02, 2012

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are meeting today at an important juncture. We launched IORARC in 1997, a decade and a half ago, with the primary objective of promoting sustained growth and balanced development of the region and of its Member States. IORARC has helped promote understanding and cooperation amongst our countries over these years, yet immense untapped potential remains.

The geo-strategic importance of the Indian Ocean cannot be underestimated. As focus of global economic growth shifts to Asia, it will occupy even greater salience in our strategic perspective. We envision IORARC as a regional body that can respond effectively to this need and enhance our individual and collective capacities to deal with contemporary challenges facing our common maritime domain. It must be strengthened to enable it to rise to our expectations.

We considered it appropriate, therefore, to focus our deliberations today on the theme "IORARC at 15 – the Next Decade". In our view, the objective of this exercise should be to lay down a roadmap and agenda for our Association for the coming years that will eventually establish IORARC as an apex organization for the Indian Ocean region.

Our region is characterized by great diversities in size, population and levels of development. A prospective roadmap for our Association must therefore be inclusive, taking IORARC forward at a pace acceptable to all.

Secondly, in facilitating the creation of a regional climate conducive to peace and prosperity, IORARC should aim at opening as many channels of communication and cooperation amongst its membership as feasible. It must thus be comprehensive, an integrated effort bringing together governments, civil society and business and deepening people-to-people contacts.

In this context, we should consider a university dedicated to a comprehensive range of subjects relevant to the Indian Ocean including its political economy, maritime and environmental issues.

And finally, its agenda must reflect common regional interests that hold value for its membership. We took the first steps when we last met in Bengaluru in November 2011, and identified six priorities for our Association's work, including maritime security and safety, disaster risk reduction, trade & investment facilitation, fisheries management, academic and S&T cooperation, and tourism and cultural exchanges.

Each of these areas has its own relevance for us. Here I would like to touch on just three aspects.

Economic cooperation is at the core of our collective effort, and we need to consider appropriate initiatives aimed at meeting the developmental, energy and food security needs of our region, new infrastructural linkages with enhanced connectivity, and trade and investment facilitation that builds on the complementarities in our economic strengths.

Job creation for our growing youthful populations is an imperative across our region. Capacity

building and skilling in all our identified priority areas is a cross-cutting need, which IORARC can also address.

Economic development cooperation requires a conducive environment to flower. Security of maritime commerce and safety of seafarers are of concern to all of us. There is a need, for example, to be more precise in defining High Risk Areas in the Indian Ocean, based on actual incidents of piracy, as this impacts adversely on insurance premiums and adds to the cost of shipping in our region. India will host an IORARC seminar on maritime security in early 2013, and we should consider its institutionalization as a regional forum for continuing exchange of views and monitoring of the situation.

Finally, we should consider ways and means of providing greater structure to the IORARC process. We could consider having a theme of contemporary relevance for future Council meetings, for example, as we have done for this one, which can help focus our discussions on the issues at hand.

Excellencies, I thank you for your attention and look forward to hearing your views.

Gurgaon,
November 2, 2012

AUSTRALIA

**IOR-ARC Council of Ministers' Meeting
2 November 2012, Gurgaon, India
Australian Opening Statement
Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs
Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs
The Hon Richard Marles MP**

I would like to thank the Government of India for the extremely efficient, generous arrangements made for our meeting today – and for the suite of officials, academics and business meetings earlier this week. It is great to have a chance to visit Gurgaon and see “Incredible India” in motion. I also congratulate our Host and Chair on his promotion to Foreign Minister and I very much enjoyed our meeting yesterday.

Australia wants our discussions and decisions to result in outcomes. We want outcomes which will make a practical difference to our members from this meeting, ones which will really add value for all of us.

Australia is ready to contribute to those outcomes. We are today proposing a package of new projects worth \$ 1.3 million, in addition to measure announced last year. These will concentrate on new fields within the key priority areas.

We want to help find out how our oceans work – and how best to make it world for us, for our collective benefit. We wish to organise a new workshop for experts from IOR-ARC countries in ocean forecasting to meet, to build capacity, to progress, validate and apply Indian Ocean Forecasting Systems.

Addressing climate variability is also another important area to address in the Indian Ocean region. We have an initiative to help strengthen adaption to climate variability, which will help to evaluate capacity among IOR-ARC members to identify, develop and implement appropriate adaptations based on common understanding of the impacts of climate variability.

It is also important to build the capacity of member officials in maritime security and safety. As such we will host a course in maritime regulation and enforcement, and Maritimes security for officials working in this area. IN addition, Australia will also undertake an Indian Ocean Post State Control Capacity Development Program. This will improve the application of national Port State Control procedures in the Indian Ocean region – and will involve those members affiliated with the Indian Ocean Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control.

Furthermore, we believe more can be done among members to reduce our risks of disasters. We wish to build closer cooperation in this area so would like to host (or co-host) a meeting for officials from IOR-ARC National Disaster Management Offices. We hope that this will allow disaster management officials to work together further to find new ways to cooperate in this important field.

While we do not want to overload our system; nor to over-reach with our plans, we do not want to keep building on the strong foundations set by India as Chair.

To that end, we want the membership of IOR-ARC to cover more of the countries which call the Indian Ocean their home and want to congratulate Comoros on their membership. We want our links with other regional bodies – IOC, AECN and SADC especially – to be closer, more frequent, and more comprehensive. We want our list of effective, practical projects to grow year by year. And we want our level of ambition to rise, to match our growing sense of common purpose and common interests.

Next year, when we meet again, Australia will have the honour of taking the Chair of this group. We have worked closely and collaboratively with India at this Council as at the last. For the next two years, we will depend on the advice and guidance of India – and of Indonesia.

All the membership, though, will need to work together, as we will today, to give ever more substance and momentum to our Organisation and to our regional identity.

BANGLADESH**Statement by H.E. Mr. Mijarul Quayes, Foreign Secretary of Bangladesh at the
12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC in Gurgaon, India on 2 November
2012**

Mr. Chairman,

May I at the outset offer warm congratulations on your assumption of the office of the Minister of External Affairs of India and of the Chair of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers. I have firm conviction that, under your able stewardship, our deliberations today Council session will be eminently fruitful. Through you, I would like also to extend sincere thanks to the government of India for the warm reception and generous hospitality and for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting. Congratulations are also due to the Government of India for the commendable leadership of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC since its 11th Session last year. I would also like to put on record our deep appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary General in infusing dynamism into the work of our Association.

We welcome the Union of Comoros as a member of the Association.

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The Indian Ocean is not just an extended expanse of blue waters washing our shores. These waters do not separate our nations, but link us, not least as the busiest maritime trade route. Down through the ages, Indian Ocean has been the vehicle for inter-mingling of peoples, cultures and economies across continents. Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation provides the platform to celebrate our common heritage of the Indian Ocean and to craft modern-day cooperative arrangements.

As we mark 15 years of this organization, we can justifiably celebrate the decade and a half of its existence, but we also have a unique occasion for introspection to reflect on our performance since inception and on the future shape that we would like it to take. Although somewhat sluggish in the initial years, our Association has demonstrated some visible progress in recent years. The full functioning of the flagship project the *Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT)*; operationalization of the *Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)*; and near completion of the establishment of the *Maritime Transport Council (MTC)* are note worthy in recent years. The last few years have also seen an exercise of review for the Association to deliver on its promises in full. Notably, we have written a new Charter, staff & financial regulations; increased frequency of meetings; adopted a clustering approach in project formulation; established a special fund for complementing project funding; and identified six priority areas of cooperation. Now that our Association has consolidated its institutional base, it is perhaps time for us to focus our attention on efforts for concrete outcomes. Bangladesh has a particular desire to see IOR-ARC on a forward journey towards a goal of delivery of tangible benefits for all our peoples.

However, as it is recovering from the recession of 2008, the global economy remains fragile. The second round effects of the financial melt-down are being felt in terms of decline in

export earning, investment, remittance, ODA, etc, particularly by the developing member states of our Association. We are confident that building on our synergies and complementarities would allow us to withstand such external economic upheavals as well as emerging challenges. The challenge before us is to adopt the appropriate strategy to pursue cooperation in keeping with our principle of 'open regionalism', despite the substantial diversity in geography, governance and level of development. Our strength lies in our steady growth, a burgeoning middle class that is increasingly confident about its future, a large internal market working as both a manufacturing hub and a consumer base.

Mr. Chairman,

We must keep in mind that many regional organizations subsuming member states of our Association have already progressed far in terms of integration and implementation of various important projects. Selection of projects under of IOR-ARC, therefore, needs great care to avoid duplication and to ensure that they deliver tangible benefits to the people at large. We share the view that many of the projects under our Association has not come to fruition, at least, partly because of loss of focus due to apparent proliferation of proposals without adequate resources or support to translate them into reality. Proposing projects within the broad ambit of the six identified priority areas would be crucial in this regard. We are hopeful that the current exercise of simplifying the Administrative Arrangements for Special Fund will lead to implementation of many important projects.

We welcome the designation of maritime piracy as one of the six stand-alone areas for cooperation during the last COM. Piracy in the Indian Ocean has become a matter of great concern, not only for the maritime industry, but also for the governments all over the world due to its high human and economic cost. Bangladesh shares the concern of other countries concerning this menace. The extent of their search signifies that it would be difficult to curb the threat posed by piracy without a concerted regional, trans-regional and international campaign. Bangladesh believes that effective port administration, well-equipped enforcement agency, judicial and legislative capacity-building as well as counter-piracy measures in the ships are some important immediate measures against piracy in the Indian Ocean. However, in the long run, creation of good order at the sea which would prevent illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing activities in and around Somali waters by other nations would be needed. May I flag that Bangladesh is a party to the Regional Co-operation Agreement Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery (ReCAAP) and is in close touch with the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) as part of her commitment to counter-piracy efforts. We have also initiated discussion on this menace under the forum of South Asian Association of Regional Cooperation (SAARC). IOR-ARC may consider research, exchange of expertise and information to bridge any missing link. The Secretary General may look at preparing a paper on counter piracy efforts that our Association could undertake without duplicating work in other organizations.

We believe that trade and investment should remain the two key areas of cooperation in our Association. In this vein, we attach importance to progress in those two areas. In spite of the temporary setback in drafting of Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA), we support continued study in this area toward the goal of conclusion of such an agreement in future. We also wish to see progress in the drafting of the Agreement on the Promotion of Investment within IOR-ARC.

It would be relevant to mention that maritime transportation is an extremely vital factor for promoting connectivity among our peoples. It is important that we promote further development of the shipping services in the member states. We need to work toward

establishment of a free and non-discriminatory regime by which national flag carriers and qualified sailors of one member state can have easy access to the markets of the others.

Mr. Chairman,

May I also raise here that the fisheries sector is an integral part of the economies of our member states. Livelihood of as many as 30 million people of Bangladesh is linked with fishing. Marine fishery is an increasingly important element in this sector. Bangladesh has finalized the domestic process for ratification of the *UN Agreement for the Implementation of the Provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea of 10 December 1982 relating to the Conservation and Management of Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks (1995)*. About 50 to 60 thousand artisanal fishing units from Bangladesh are on the sea. We are taking measures for ensuring safety and security of these fishermen against robbery or abduction. We are also working with our neighbouring countries to ease the process of repatriation of fishermen who become stranded due to natural disasters or any other force majeure.

We attach particular importance to cooperation in the tourism sector for promoting people-to-people contact. We are in favour of chalking out a strategy to implement the recommendations of the first phase of the Tourism Feasibility Study. We also look forward to the second phase of study that would address all the remaining areas and issues for fostering a balanced development of this sector throughout our region.

Mr. Chairman,

Natural disasters are a recurrent phenomenon for our region, whose severity is being intensified by the impact of climate change. Since disasters strike different countries at different times in an unpredictable manner, it is not possible for any individual country to dedicate a major chunk of its resources solely to manage disasters at the cost of vital sectors of development. We need to assess and address the challenges that climate change poses to climate sensitive sectors of our countries, including water resources; agriculture and therefore, food security; health, energy; urban planning; tourism etc. The Sana'a Communiqué issued from 10th COM on 05 August 2010 stressed the need for greater cooperation in addressing the challenges emanating from climate change.

Mr. Chairman,

IOR-ARC must serve as active agent of change contributing to the betterment of the lives of our people. The potentials of the Indian Ocean Rim are immense. We envisage IOR-ARC as a catalyst for a qualitative impact on people's lives and our capacity to collectively impact all others.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

INDONESIA

**“Promoting a Comprehensive Connectivity in the Indian Ocean-Rim”
Statement by H.E Mr. Budi Bowoleksono, Secretary General, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
prepared for
The 12th IOR-ARC Council of Ministers
Gurgaon, India, 2 November 2012**

Your Excellency Mr Salman Khurshid, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India, and
Chairman of the Council of Ministers,

Distinguished Ministers and Heads of Delegation,

Mr Secretary General of the IOR-ARC

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. Chairman, and your team for the excellent arrangement and very generous hospitality extended to my delegation and myself.

I wish to use this opportunity to extend the regret of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia, His Excellency Dr. Marty Natalegawa, for being unable to attend this meeting, in spite of his strong wish to participate. I join him in expressing our full confidence in your ability, Mr. Chairman, to bring this meeting of Council of Ministers to a productive and successful conclusion.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome into our midst the Union of Comoros. This enlargement of our Association is both evidence and expectation that IOR-ARC has to become even more relevant to our region.

As we mark the 15th anniversary of our Association, the theme of “IOR-ARC at 15: the Next Decade” is very pertinent and forward-looking. It is an appropriate moment for us to review our cooperation – to see if it has reflected the aspiration of all members of this forum that seeks concrete action – and to decide our agenda for the next decade.

Let us have a look at the state of our region and cooperation these days.

The IMF predicted that the economic slowdown in Europe and United States would likely to continue, dragging the global growth to 3.3 per cent. Meanwhile, the inequality in our region has also grown to a worrying degree.

What has our cooperation done to improve the resiliency and inclusiveness of our region?

The energy and food market are still very volatile. The poor quality of our supply-chain, combined with the increasing demand of our fast growing economy and population, are straining our energy and food security. Our naturally disaster-prone regions tend to exacerbate

our problems. Continued incidence of piracy in our ocean complicates our efforts to resolve pressing issues.

What has our cooperation done to address these immense challenges?

The IOR-ARC actually has the capacity to give more impact to the world and to our people. We are a forum comprising 20 member countries, stretches from southern part of Africa to eastern part of Australia. We could be a self-reliance and resilient region, a powerhouse of our own economy.

I was, therefore, very pleased to hear that the Council of Senior Officials had discussed issues such as health, food security and climate change. We support the broadening of the Association's scope of work because it is important to have strong sectoral and functional cooperation.

To do that, we need to establish a more solid connection to act collaboratively as a forum. Therefore, connectivity would be a natural element to be strengthened, as an overarching agenda in the next decade.

Our effort to promote connectivity in the Indian Ocean Rim should be more than just building ports, roads, and bridges to deliver our goods faster – crucially important as they are. It should incorporate actions to improve coordination between our institutions. It should integrate efforts to strengthen our people-to-people interaction. It should also include activities to promote business-to-business cooperation.

Last year, we have identified six main areas as the focus of our cooperation. These six areas of our shared concern and interest could be the groundwork of our effort to promote a more comprehensive connectivity in our region. By having a more comprehensive connectivity, we will eventually engrave deeper trust and understanding among our nation, and build better sense of confidence and community among our people.

With a stronger confidence, we could improve our cooperation in the forum.

With a stronger cooperation, we could strengthen our prosperity as a region.

With a stronger prosperity, we could give meaningful contributions to the world.

Let us walk the talk and convert our commitments into real projects and activities.

India has served us well as the able chair and leader of the Association, for which we are grateful. I am confident that with your strong support for the next chair, Australia, and Indonesia as vice-chair, we will be able to further advance our cooperation in the next two years.

Thank you.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Mohammad Mehdi Akhondzadeh, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic
Republic of Iran
For Legal and International Affairs
Before the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim Association for
Regional Cooperation
2 November 2012 – Gurgaon, New Delhi**

**Mr. Chairman
Honorable Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

First of all, I should express my gratitude to H.E. Salman Khurshid, distinguished Minister of External Affairs of India for warm hospitality in charming city of Gurgaon and for the arrangements of the current Meeting of Council of Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation, and its sideline gatherings to foster public and private engagement in the work of the Association. I should thank the Secretariat of IOR-ARC for their elaborate arrangements. We found the report of and Ambassador Bhagirath, IOR-ARC Secretary-General a substantive and useful document.

Mr. Chairman

The Indian Ocean is the world's third largest Ocean which carries half of the world's container ships, one third of the bulk cargo traffic, and two-thirds of the world's oil shipments. It is indeed a lifeline of international trade and economy. The Indian Ocean Rim with population of 2 billion constitutes around a third of the world's population which makes it a massive market. It is rich in strategic and precious minerals and metals and other natural resources, valuable marine resources ranging from food fisheries to raw material and energy for industries. It has abundant agricultural wealth in terms of the variety and mass of arable land and has significant human resources and technological capabilities. It is a region of much diversity, in culture, race, religion, economic development, and strategic interests.

IOR-ARC has been designed to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial cooperation. Emanation of Indian Ocean Association is, indeed, an important manifestation of the revival of interest in cooperation among countries of our region.

The Islamic Republic of Iran attaches great importance to multilateral cooperation as an important means of growth and development of the countries of the region. IOR-ARC could play a unique role in further development of the region in different matters pertaining to 6 priority areas designated by Council of Ministers. In this context I maintain that the role of the subsidiary bodies of the Association is of great importance, and the initiatives and performance of Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI), Business Forum (IORBF), and Academic Group (IORAG) according to their mandate should be supported by us as policy making body of Association.

Mr. Chairman

We are happy to note that science and technology is one key area for cooperation in the Association. We have hosted Regional Center of Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) in Tehran, and accordingly we have done every effort to support the Centre in materializing its aims and goals. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran as host of RCSTT has assisted the Centre on a sustainable basis, in order to enable it become a global centre of excellence in science and technology transfer.

Recently the Cabinet of Ministers has adopted a financial decision of granting annually 200/000 US Dollar to the Centre. This grant has been allocated from this year onward, and we sincerely hope other member states of IOR-ARC initiate their financial grants to the Centre in order to enable it achieve its noble goals.

Mr. Chairman

Allow me to touch upon some of the important issues before our Council. First, with regards to proposal of increase in annual membership contribution, we believe we should be concerned and opt for enhancement of functioning of the Secretariat, and in this regard we support any proposal proposed by Committee of Senior Officials to enhance capabilities of the Secretariat in performing its mandate.

Secondly, my Delegation while commending India for voluntary contribution of 1 million US Dollars to the Special Fund, supports the agreed text of the Administrative Arrangements for Special Fund. We believe designing joint projects, co-funding for projects and due attention to less developed countries and projects which merely target Association priorities areas are of vital importance.

We believe there are more rooms for our Association in international arena, especially cooperation with United Nations and intergovernmental bodies in the region and beyond. In this regard we support obtaining observer status with UN General Assembly which first of all promotes international recognition of the Association and secondly will be a base for substantive engagement and to utilize deliberations and consultations in these bodies.

Mr. Chairman

As human beings are the focus of development, it is imperative to create an enabling environment for development as well as sound macroeconomic policies conducive to high investment rates for further enhancement of human resources in regional countries including mine. Unfortunately and contrary to our common expectations, the international community has witnessed a tendency to divide the world into unnecessary rival camps through exclusionist policies, which would adversely affect free trade as well as integration of all states into the world economy.

A majority of countries in our region are still confronted by numerous shared and common problems and great challenges such as extreme poverty, global food crisis and continued food insecurity, high level of unemployment, external debt burden, and lack of financial aid and climate change negative effects.

We believe that countries of our region should work on a vigorous, coordinated and comprehensive global response to these challenges, and to undertake immediate actions and initiatives to overcome these challenges. We need to shape a comprehensive plan of action with a focus on eradicating poverty, and deployment and transfer of advanced technologies. We should be cognizant of the fact that Coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against countries of our region violates and undermines international law and severely threaten freedom of trade and investment.

Last but not least, Mr. Chairman, We are confident that this Council of Ministers Meeting will certainly contribute to the efforts aimed at expanding regional cooperation and to the promotion and enhancement of our Association.

Once again I would like to extend my gratitude to the Government of India for wonderful arrangements and in particular Your Excellency, the Minister of External Affairs for chairing our Meeting, and I thank you for your attention.

KENYA

STATEMENT BY HON. AMB. PROF. SAM K. ONGERI, EGH, MP, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ON THE OCCASION OF THE 12TH MEETING OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC), 2ND NOVEMBER, 2012 GURGAON, INDIA

**Your Excellencies, Fellow Ministers,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me to begin by conveying deep appreciation to the Government of India for the kind treatment and generosity that my delegation and I have received since our arrival in this beautiful city of Gurgaon. The warmth and hospitality traditionally associated with the Indian people has been manifest in all our engagements.

I also wish to take this opportunity to thank all the distinguished delegations from the IOR-ARC member countries who have displayed their commitment to this association. Their presence here for the last few days has enabled healthy discussions and an exchange of proposals on cooperation initiatives and the way forward for this very important association.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya fully supports the underlying fundamentals of multilateralism which have enabled member states and friends of IOR-ARC to subscribe whole heartedly to the objectives of this association.

As a founding member of this association, Kenya remains fully committed to the objectives of the IOR-ARC charter. We are proud to see visible progress in the commissioning of joint projects and undertaking of various mutually beneficial technical cooperation initiatives between partner states. It is our sincere belief that there is still additional space for more and deeper initiatives of cooperation, as well as opportunities to harness the great potential of this association.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya continues to benefit greatly from collaboration frameworks with various countries in Science, Technology and Innovation. We are keen to share our successes with member states and even more through the Academic and Inter-Universities Group. Kenya's most celebrated research institutions are in the fields of agriculture, human and animal medicine, marine and fisheries, forestry and wildlife.

Kenya deeply appreciates the proposed programme of University mobility in the Indian Ocean Region (UMIOR) which will encourage and further facilitate exchange programmes and visits for students, professors and technical experts among institutions of higher learning.

Mr. Chairman,

The enhancement of trade and investment between member states is crucial for the promotion of development objectives as a region. We appreciate the great efforts taken by member countries during the meetings of the IOR Business Forum and the Working Group on Trade and Investment to work towards the achievement of these goals. My country will continue to support the study on the establishment of the Free Trade Area, and the finalization of the database of business membership organizations.

While appreciating that tourism has over the years become a major driving force of the economies of most member states of the IOR-ARC, it is important to recognize the effects of the global financial crisis on luxury and holiday travel and the attendant impact on economies that draw foreign exchange earnings from tourism. IOR - ARC is blessed with the world's most unique fauna and flora and a rich heritage that has been preserved over thousands of years. It is in this regard that Kenya presented a concept paper on cooperation in tourism for consideration by members of this association. With the assistance of the Secretariat, we hope to receive positive responses and additional views of member states on the proposal and its recommendations.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya would like to associate itself with the proposal made by Yemen and other states for a regional initiative towards combating piracy along the waters of the Gulf of Aden. This

phenomenon has negative implications on international trade, fishing and other economic objectives in the region.

In this regard, Kenya supports UN Security Council Resolutions which call for nations to work together and use all means necessary to contain the problem of piracy in the Indian Ocean. As a Government, we will do our part in contributing to international efforts to combat piracy.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya, together with its international partners, has been involved in various initiatives aimed at restoring peace in the war ravaged nation of Somalia. We are encouraged by the recent developments in Somalia and in particular the election of a new President, Prime Minister and adaptation of a new constitution. We believe the recent military advances made by AMISOM in liberating large sections of Somalia from militias will give the Somali government added impetus to fast track the implementation of the Kampala Roadmap.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, on behalf of the people of Kenya, I would like to join hands with other member countries in conveying our commitment to the objectives of IOR-ARC, and in supporting the application by the United States of America to be admitted as a dialogue partner.

I Thank You

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MINISTRE DES AFFAIRES ETRANGERES

**SPEECH OF H.E.M. Pierrot J. RAJAONARIVELO
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF MADAGASCAR
AT THE 12th IOR ARC C.O.M
02 NOVEMBER 2012**

Chairman,
Dear Colleagues,
Distinguished Delegates,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of Malagasy Government, I would like to pay special tribute to the Indian Government, the incumbent Chairpersonship of IOR-ARC for hosting the 12th meeting of the Council of Ministers and for the warm hospitality of this amazingly beautiful country; a country which can combine traditions and modernity.

Indeed, India has achieved a sterling work in promoting multi-sector development, solidarity and exchanges between IOR-ARC Member States. To illustrate, the amount of one million US Dollars that has just been granted to our Regional Community by the Indian Government in order to realize our projects and programs.

I would like to congratulate the Union of Comoros for joining and being the 20th member of the IOR ARC.

Let me also extend my congratulations to all IOR- ARC Member States on the commemoration of our Organization's fifteenth Anniversary this year. An Anniversary that makes us proud of our achievements and an opportunity to be hopeful for highly promising prospects for all the countries in the Region and the rest of the world.

Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Madagascar has not been left behind for that hope. Actually, despite the tough and strenuous situation which has been prevailing in my country since 2009 up to the present time, IOR ARC and its Member States have always stood on our side. It is reflective of the unfailing solidarity of the Indian-Ocean community towards Malagasy people. Accordingly, Madagascar has always been informed about IOR-ARC activities. However, for lack of funds, our contributions were limited to the strict minimum, in keeping with our financial possibilities.

In spite of this situation, and given the sincere and mutual friendship between Madagascar and all IOR-ARC Member States, the Malagasy Government has especially favored our participation in this Council of Ministers, to show our unconditional commitment to the values and objectives of this Regional body.

Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Now, I can assert that a major step has been made in my country. Admittedly, the International community support has culminated in the establishment of all transitional institutions. The ultimate stage of ending the crisis, which is based on election organization, is in process. Therefore, Madagascar is still calling upon international solidarity, particularly IOR ARC Members States, to support our country in this difficult task on which depend the future and the stability of our Nation.

On the 24th of October, a partnership agreement was signed between the international

community and donors and the Malagasy government. This document contains the financial requirements prerequisite to hold democratic, fair, credible, transparent and consensual elections in Madagascar, expected to be held on May 2013. This document also describes the financial commitments of both parties for these elections.

Similarly, the Transitional Government is paving the way towards economic recovery. The post-crisis economic reconstruction is a major project to which all national and international development stakeholders should contribute effectively. At national level, this is marked by the Government's decision to boost EDBM's activities or Economic Development Board for Madagascar.

In the same vein, I would like to praise the ongoing project of IOR-ARC Secretariat, namely "IOR-ARC Business Portal". A project which aims at making all Member States' economic data available.

This project will facilitate the promotion of partnerships among development actors of public and private sectors in the Region. In doing so, the Malagasy Government will certainly take necessary measures to motivate these stakeholders so that they will respond positively towards this project.

As for IOR-ARC working groups and its flagship projects such as: Working Group on Trade and Investment, Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum, Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group, Maritim Transport Council, IOR ARC regional Center for Science and Technology Transfer, Fishery Support Unit, Promoting Cultural Cooperation, Promotion of Tourism and University Mobility in IOR, consultations and coordination are currently under way in Madagascar. The personal data about the relevant new liaison officers will be transmitted to IOR-ARC Secretariat soon.

Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I firmly believe that the glorious future of my country lies within the Indian Ocean countries, if referring to the geographic position and the historical ties between our countries, which is reinforced by the multi-sector potential of the Region vis-a vis its member states and globally.

Madagascar is optimistic about the future of the IOR-ARC organization: in fact, the motivation of each member to move forward is cause for optimism; we do remain optimistic because after fifteen years of existence, IOR-ARC has reached its present stage; we also feel optimistic due to the world growing interest towards this Economic Organization judging by the number of membership, partnership or observation requests in this Organization.

Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

In the next decade, IOR-ARC will consolidate its achievements, strengthen solidarity among its members, eradicate piracy and all kinds of maritime insecurity which might hinder the promotion of regional and multilateral exchanges. A new decade that will confirm the major change in the geo-economic world towards the Indian Ocean.

Chairman,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Last but not the least, on behalf of the Government of Madagascar, allow me to thank the Secretariat of IOR ARC for its commitments and its hard works for the preparation of all our meetings.

Mr. President,
Dear Colleagues and Delegates,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Thank you for your kind attention.

MALAYSIA

IOR-ARC 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM)
Gurgaon, India
2 November 2012

**Country Statement by H.E. Mr. Datuk Richard Riot Jaem, Deputy Minister of
Foreign Affairs for YB DFM
at General Debate Session**

**Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Let me begin by expressing my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your recent appointment as the Minister of External Affairs of India. In this regard, I take this opportunity to wish you continued success in your new and distinguished position.

2. I wish also to express my deep gratitude to you, Excellency, as well as, to the Government and people of India, for the warm hospitality and excellent arrangements that were extended to me and my delegation, during our stay here in this vibrant city of Gurgaon, for this important gathering of the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC).

3. This is my first time to this part of India, though I was in Bangalore last year. I am indeed delighted to be in this city, while getting a glimpse of Delhi, yesterday.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. The Indian Ocean Rim countries represent a melting pot of diverse ethnicities, cultures and religions. From the statement made by distinguished colleagues before me, I take note that we all here for a common goal, and that is of expanding and deepening cooperation among us.

5. In this regard, Malaysia believes that IOR-ARC remains a viable and important platform for close cooperation among the Indian Ocean Rim countries. As an organization that has been in existence for more than 15 years, IOR-ARC has indeed grown in its importance of intensifying mutual understanding and strengthening close partnerships among its member countries.

6. To make IOR-ARC more effective and to further increase its profile, Malaysia is of the view that IOR-ARC members should consolidate further and draw focus on tangible deliverables. There is no doubt that IOR-ARC has the potential to become an important mechanism to help member countries achieve their national development agendas.

7. For that to happen, we certainly need to establish a niche for IOR-ARC with practical programmes and initiatives that are based on the existing principles of open regionalism and consensus.

8. At the same time, it is pertinent for IOR-ARC programmes to be conducted based on the voluntary spirit of inclusive participation and in accordance with the members' ability and capacity.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. Malaysia attaches great importance to the IOR-ARC initiatives and has taken the necessary measures to prioritise projects, especially in the areas of education, trade, investment and human capacity building.

10. One of the main opportunities for cooperation identified by Malaysia is in the area of education. Malaysia believes that there is great potential for education cooperation among IOR-ARC member countries. Based on this spirit, Malaysia through the National University of Malaysia, or commonly known as UKM, has presented a concept paper during the IOR Academic Group meeting earlier this week. The concept paper is aimed at the eventual establishment of a Center for Multilateral Education.

11. The initial concept of this proposed Center for Multilateral Education would focus on entrepreneurship education, which is increasingly being recognized as one of the key drivers of generating economic growth, spurring productivity and innovation, as well as, creating employment opportunities.

12. In this regard, Malaysia hopes to institutionalize our joint efforts to upgrade our educators, particularly in delivering quality and effective sharing of knowledge in entrepreneurship education for IOR-ARC members.

13. In the area of trade and investment, Malaysia remains committed to ensuring the nation's economic cooperation with IOR-ARC member countries, continue to flourish. Despite the volatile global economic outlook, in particular the Eurozone financial crisis, Malaysia is pleased to note that the total trade between Malaysia with IOR-ARC member countries has continued to expand.

14. For the year 2011, total trade between Malaysia and IOR-ARC member countries increased by approximately 13 percent to the tune of USD133.7 billion, as compared to the previous year. This has contributed to approximately 32 percent of Malaysia's total external trade. Hence, Malaysia is heartened by the growing intra-regional trade, such as trade among the IOR-ARC member countries.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

15. Malaysia echoes the sentiments of other IOR-ARC members on the need for us to work closer for the greater benefit of us all. The positive interaction among IOR-ARC partners over the years is a fundamental step towards the right direction that would significantly contribute towards a strengthened IOR-ARC cooperation.

16. In this context, Malaysia welcomes the Union of Comoros as a new member of IOR-ARC. Pursuant to Seychelles re-joining IOR-ARC last year, the new membership of Comoros is

a manifest that the work undertaken by our Association is gaining more recognition among the international community, and that, there is an increasing interest towards IOR-ARC. We should capitalize on this momentum and continue to intensify cooperation to realize the objectives, and achieve the tangible targets of IOR-ARC.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

17. Finally, I wish to once again commend our host, India, for the excellent arrangements and for the efforts made to ensure the success of this meeting. I look forward to fruitful deliberations wiyth colleagues for the rest of the meeting.

Thank you.

MAURITIUS

**AGENDA ITEM 2: STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. A.P. NEEWOOR.
GOSK, CSK, SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
at the IOR-ARC Council Meeting, Gurgaon, 2 November 2012**

Chairperson

Hon. Ministers

**Distinguished Representatives of Dialogue Partners (UK, France, Egypt, China, Japan)
and of the Observer Organizations (the Indian Ocean Tourism Organization and the
Indian Ocean Research Group)**

Distinguished Delegates

At the outset, let me seize this opportunity to congratulate H.E. Mr. Salman Khurshid for assuming his new important portfolio as the Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India. We look forward to work closely under your able leadership, and we are confident that you will steer our Group ahead for the achievement of our common objectives for the next decade.

I would also like to express my profound gratitude to the Government of the Republic of India for the warm welcome and kind hospitality extended to the Mauritian delegation.

I wish to welcome Comoros as the new member of our organization as well as United States as the new Dialogue Partner.

Excellency,

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to address this distinguished group while we are reflecting on the theme “**IOR at 15 – a decade ahead**”. We are here today to take stock of the achievements of our organization and to reflect on the experiences and the challenges ahead. I am confident that we shall come up with constructive decisions for the future direction of our organization and we shall prioritize our actions towards this end.

Mauritius, as a founding member of the organization, has always and will always provide the necessary support and assistance to the organization. Some of you will surely recollect how we have worked together for the launching of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation in Mauritius on 7 March 1997 at the first Ministerial Meeting.

Since then we have come a long way and some of the important achievements of the IOR-ARC are:

- (i) The creation of the Special Fund in 2006 to speed up the implementation of projects;
- (ii) The setting up of the Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) in 2008 aimed at developing research and support in new technologies
- (iii) The adoption of a new Charter in 2010 in the wake of the global changes;

(iv) Creation of the Fisheries Support Unit in 2010 targeting mutual cooperation on fisheries related activities; and

Further, we also expect that the imminent establishment of the Maritime Transport Council will promote cooperation in maritime transport activities and enhance the much needed connectivity in our region.

We are very grateful to India for its significant contribution to the Special Fund. The adoption of the new procedures relating to the Funding Administration will ensure project implementation to be accelerated. We believe the speeding up of the disbursement of the Funds would encourage other Member States and Dialogue Partners to contribute to the Special Fund.

Excellency,

I would like to share some of our thoughts that would give new impetus to our organization. With its new mandate, as set out in the revised Charter 2010, there are major milestones that IOR-ARC could achieve in the next decade. In this endeavour, the support of all Members is important to enable the effective empowering of our organization to meet the upcoming challenges.

After 15 years of existence, the scope of the IOR-ARC has extended from a platform where issues of common interest were discussed to a dynamic regional grouping, willing to cooperate in areas like trade and investment, tourism, energy, disaster, protection of environment and transport. The time has now come to set out targets with a new vision and to unleash the dynamic complementarities among our member states. The six priority areas agreed upon at Bengaluru reflect this paradigm shift.

Excellency,

I therefore believe that we need to prioritize our actions and focus on the following issues:

(i) Trade

First, on the trade front at the inception of the IOR-ARC, there was a serious challenge in embarking on a full-fledged trade agenda with the result that the economic integration route was avoided. We firmly believe that the inclusion of trade in the agenda of our organization, is critical for our economic integration.

(ii) Transport

In the area of transport and logistics, discussions are on-going for the improvement of the capacity, frequency and reliability of air and maritime transport, in particular cargo traffic as part of the strategy for the region to be connected and competitive. The Maritime Transport Council hosted by the Sultanate of Oman, is set to give an added boost to maritime transport.

(iii) Maritime Security

Mauritius attaches much importance to maritime security which is also being discussed in other fora such as EU, AU, SADC, COMESA and IOC. As part of the Indian Ocean Rim, we need to work together to enhance our capacity to address the maritime security issues for the region.

Excellency,

These are the few ideas that I wanted to share with the Group. It is our sincere desire that such orientations will help our organization in fostering our common goals.

I thank you, Chairperson.

MOZAMBIQUE



REPÚBLIC OF MOZAMBIQUE

MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND COOPERATION

Statement by His Excellency Henrique Banze

Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

At

The 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC

Gurgaon, India, 02 November 2012

Mr Chairman

Distinguished Heads of Delegations,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me, at the outset, to convey my sincere gratitude for the invitation addressed to my country to participate in this important 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim-Intergovernmental Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC).

Our deep appreciation goes to the People and Government of the Republic of India on convening this meeting and for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Gurgaon.

Mr. Chairman, [I wish to congratulate you upon your election to preside over this meeting.](#) We are confident that, under your leadership, our deliberations will be crowned with success. On our side, we assure you, Mr.Chairman, of our readiness to fully cooperate in the discharge of your responsibilities.

Our particular recognition also goes to our Senior Officials, as well as to the General Secretariat of IOR-ARC for the excellent preparatory work done,

I would also like to express our gratitude to [the](#) Secretary General of the IOR-ARC for his commitment to our Organization.

Mr. Chairman

Honourable Ministers

Ladies and Gentleman

The current session of the Council of Ministers, takes place fifteen years since the inauguration of the Association in Mauritius in March 1997. It might therefore, be appropriate for us to take stock of our achievements thus fare as well as too adjust the way we work wherever necessary to improve our capacity for the attainment of our objectives.

In assessing the achievements of our organization, we must take into account the fact that we are a diverse group of countries, with different levels of economic development and integrating, at times, different regional groupings. However, it is the Indian Ocean, which sustains the maritime lifeline of over 50% of world trade that binds us together.

Today, after 15 years of existence of the IOR-ARC, it is possible to make a positive assessment of the objectives that guided its founding fathers. In fact, IOR-ARC has established itself as a significant multilateral forum and won recognition both within the member States, and at the international level.

The joining in of Comores as full member and United States of America as a Dialogue Partner gives substance to this recognition. Therefore, I wish to congratulate both the Comores and USA. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our solidarity to USA for the negative impact of Sandy storm and for the loss of lives it has caused.

Mr Chaiman,

This meeting constitutes an excellent opportunity to strengthen the ideals of IOR-ARC and to reinforce cooperation among member States.

This is the time to deepen our multilateral relations at all levels, so that our Association can become a powerful and dynamic force capable of contributing to peace and security, including maritime security including the fight against piracy, and accelerate growth and development, enhancing cooperation in thematic areas such as tourism, fisheries, trade and investment, science and technology and disaster management.

The growing level of cooperation among member States it is a clear indicator that the future of IOR-ARC is bright and, notwithstanding the challenges that it faces, through our joint efforts and common objectives we will succeed in the search for the improvement of the standard of life of our peoples as well as their aspirations for prosperity.

Ladies and Gentleman

The world today is witnessing unprecedented crisis with a tremendous negative impact on the economic growth, especially in (Least) Developed Countries. The impact of recent economic and financial crisis, climate change and piracy, poses challenges that require us to rethink the strategic role of our Association and find appropriate mechanisms to address these global challenges.

Notwithstanding these challenges some member States of our Association have witnessed rapid economic growth and IOR-ARC should consider mechanisms to translate this increase in growth into more intra-regional cooperation aimed at benefiting all member States. We therefore, welcome the Study on *Trade and Investment Prospects of the IOR-ARC in the new Millennium-New Economic Frontier of the Region*. We believe that it will prompt the adoption of trade facilitation measures aimed at facilitating and boosting intra IOR-ARC business and investment.

In this context, we need more solidarity, particularly south-south, notwithstanding north-south and triangular cooperation among our countries with a view to promote sustainable development. Our Organization should encourage these platforms of cooperation, in order to enable a more favourable environment for public and private partnership in the development of

infrastructures, capacity building, transfer of technology, and strengthening of small and medium enterprises that will lead to prosperity and sustainable development.

Your Excellencies,

Mozambique has registered an average annual growth of about 7 percent over the past 10 years and the developments arising from investments in the extraction and prospection of coal, gas and other natural resources, points to an annual growth above 10 percent in the coming years.

With more than 2.800 km of Indian Ocean coastline, Mozambique has a tremendous tourism potential as well as an extensive road network, rail and ports that serves potentially domestic and regional trade.

Improving the business environment remains high challenge on our agenda. As an illustration of this positive trend, the Government of Mozambique approved the last five years investment projects estimated at over 20 billion U.S. dollars. These investments have contributed significantly in job creation.

The discovery of natural resources, in particular coal and gas, further enhances the prospect of economic development in Mozambique, given its potential to stimulate economic development in other sectors such as agriculture and processing agro-industry, energy, transport and communications, tourism, construction and others.

We invite IOR-ARC member States to take stock of these opportunities for furthering intra IOR-ARC cooperation.

Ladies and Gentleman

Scaling up food security and nutrition is a challenge that Mozambique is committed to face for the attainment of Mozambican well-being, as well to contribute for other partner countries to achieve. That's why in its chairmanship of Portuguese Speaking Community, for 2 years, Mozambique will lead food security efforts. Thus, we see an important role being played by Indian Ocean and obviously by IOR-ARC.

Therefore, I would like to thank the support and willingness expressed by the member States to join the implementation of the proposed projects by Mozambique on Sustainable Development of Aquaculture Security and Poverty Reduction and the Artisanal Fisheries.

These two projects aimed at reducing poverty and contributing to food security are of utmost importance for the Government of Mozambique. We hope therefore, that the Council will consider positively the funding of these proposals through the mechanisms existing in the IOR-ARC.

Let me conclude my remarks by reiterating the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique to continue working closely with all member States of IOR-ARC and all international Dialogue Partners for the successful materialization of the objectives of our Organization.

Thank you for your kind attention!

November 02, 2012

SULTANATE OF OMAN

**His Excellency Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdullah
Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman
At the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers
Gurgaon, India**

2nd November 2012

Mr Chairman,

From the outset, I would like to convey our thanks and gratitude to the Government and people of India for their warm hospitality and for hosting the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers & Related Meetings of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) in the beautiful city of Gurgaon.

I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary General and the Secretariat of the Association for the excellent arrangement and preparations for this meeting.

Mr Chairman,

A lot has been achieved since 1997 when we established this association. However, we believe after 15 years' time has come for us to evaluate and review the achievements, the challenges and obstacles, and to also propose measures that will further improve the work of this Association.

In this regard, we propose the establishment of a "working group" that will be entrusted with this task (of review) with a view to see its report submitted before the forthcoming Ministerial Council meeting.

To show our commitment and solidarity with this Association, we would like to mention here some of the areas that we believe the working group should further examine and those are:-

We believe there are potential benefits for IOR-ARC member state business community to engage in transport and shipping related collaborative projects, such projects attract investment as well as create domestic employment.

Therefore we propose the establishment of a regional Indian Ocean Rim Maritime Transport Agency.

We propose that all fishing vessels operating in the Indian Ocean should register with the Secretariat of IOR-ARC.

SEYCHELLES

**Address by Minister Jean Paul Adam
12th Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional
Cooperation
Gurgaon, India**

Mr. Chairman, H.E. Mr. Salman Kurshid, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to congratulate you Mr. Chairman on your recent appointment as Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India. I would also like to thank the Indian Government for their hospitality. And I would also like to salute the leadership of India to make the Indian Ocean a true space for peace and development.

For us to truly be able to mobilise the potential of our oceans- and mobilise the blue economy- no state can work alone, for the ocean is about shared resources.

Seychelles and Mauritius have earlier this year become the first two countries to jointly agree and submit a proposal to the UN on the co-management of the extended continental shelf that connects our two countries. While we could have spent years going back and forth with respective claims- this simple solution means that the peoples of our two countries can benefit much sooner. We are sharing benefits- and sharing responsibility. For me, this is one of the core tenets of IOR-ARC.

IOR-ARC offers us the ideal platform to share our experiences and best practices, across this shared space. In this 15th year of existence of IOR-ARC, the need to enhance this connectivity is stronger than ever.

Seychelles is pleased and proud to be part of this Indian Ocean family, having rejoined IOR-ARC last year. And especially while we also currently hold the presidency of the Indian Ocean Commission- a grouping of the islands of the South West Indian Ocean. There is a lot of scope for partnership between the IOC and IOR-ARC, and we believe that this is an ideal time to further institutionalize this partnership, perhaps through the establishment of mutual observer status, as well as a Memorandum of Understanding on potential areas of mutual intervention.

I take this opportunity to welcome our neighbours of Comoros, whose accession to IOR-ARC will further strengthen our efforts to promote the connectivity of our ocean.

Mr. Chairman, I would also wish to express our solidarity with the government and people of Madagascar, while they proceed with the political transition leading up to elections in May next year. We would also wish to bring to all partners, of the urgent need to mobilise resources for poverty alleviation in Madagascar to ensure stability, as well as safe and violence free

elections. We also urge partners to contribute to the funding of these elections which will require significant international support.

Mr. Chairman, thanks to the determined and coordinated efforts of many nations here with us today- there has been a substantial decrease in piracy attacks in the Indian Ocean. In fact for the first quarter of this year, there have been 56% less successful attacks than during the same period last year.

But we cannot afford any form of complacency.

Because all the nations represented here today, still have too many sons and brothers being held hostage in Somalia. Because every time our fishermen are at sea, we still worry that they may not come home.

Not to mention the huge financial costs that piracy imposes on our region. Even as the number of attacks goes down, the fact that attacks are still likely means that we will still pay unaffordable insurance premiums and that it simply costs us more than it should to trade freely with each other.

The Indian Ocean Commission has set up a regional anti-piracy cell to better coordinate the efforts of its members against piracy. There is an ideal opportunity to build on these experiences in the context of IOR-ARC by also connecting with the efforts of many of our regional partners that have developed similar initiatives.

I would like to inform that Seychelles is in the process of establishing a Regional Anti-Piracy Intelligence Centre (RAPPIC), to better target the financiers of piracy. We believe we can build on this initiative within the IOR-ARC family to ensure that we can truly implement justice in our region, and that we put an end to impunity.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to particularly take this opportunity to thank the Indian Government, and its armed forces for its diligence and determination in supporting countries of the region in the fight against piracy. I also warmly appreciate all the other nations that have contributed in one way or another to this effort.

A safer Ocean means that Fisheries and Tourism, which are undeniably linked to the Security of our ocean, can flourish within the region.

A sustainable fisheries industry, means that we must plan our fisheries based on a view of the whole of the Indian Ocean, and not just the part we may happen to control. There is a lot of scope to facilitate the sharing of best practices along these lines within our organization, as well as empowering coastal states to improve their access to their own fisheries resources.

As an island nation- the ocean is also our highway. The vast majority of our imports come by sea. In this era of escalating commodity process, we strongly support the enhancement of regionally based shipping networks. By facilitating trade routes, we will create new opportunities for growth and exchanges.

Furthermore, in our attempts to foster business within member states and within our own economies, it is imperative that we maximize the opportunities by linking our countries with frequent flights, for this is crucial if we want to see business foster within the region and if we want to achieve our vision.

Mr. Chairman, We believe IOR-ARC can also be catalyst for developing business to business exchanges within SMEs of our region. As a small country, our experience has shown us that investment is not, and should not, be the preserve of multinationals. In IOR-ARC we can produce the right environment to facilitate SMEs to invest in each other, even on a small scale, and multiply possibilities for value addition.

Mr. Chairman, the principles of the blue economy imply that we are able to accelerate economic growth, while preserving our environment for future generations. I certainly am convinced that through our grouping, we have the right advocate for the blue economy in our region.

I thank you for your attention.

SINGAPORE

REMARKS BY THE SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE, MASAGOS ZULKIFLI

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the Singapore delegation, I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of India for the warm hospitality and impeccable arrangements. In particular, I wish to congratulate His Excellency Shri Salman Khurshid, on his appointment last Sunday as Minister of External Affairs. I am happy that he is chairing today's meeting, which is a reflection of the importance India attaches to IOR-ARC. I recall the leadership of his predecessor, Shri S M Krishna, who chaired the Meeting in Bangalore last year, and am confident that under His Excellency's capable leadership, today's meeting will be as equally successful.

2 The venue for this year's Council of Ministers meeting – Gurgaon – is apt. Twenty years ago, many parts of Gurgaon were undeveloped. Driving through the city yesterday, I was impressed by its development, seeing so many shopping malls, office blocks and condominiums. Gurgaon's transformation certainly bears testimony to India's growth story.

3 There are of course many other countries along the Indian Ocean Rim that have seen impressive growth and development over the past decade. Our economic links are robust. According to the Indian Council of World Affairs, the value of intra-regional trade between IOR-ARC member states was estimated to be worth US\$777 billion in 2010.

4 At the same time, we must be mindful of the dark clouds looming in our horizon. I am referring to the persistent global economic uncertainties that threaten to derail the path of growth for many developed and developing countries alike. The IMF has forecasted that global GDP will grow at only 3.3 percent this year, down from 4.3 per cent in 2011. Ultimately, our economies will be affected in one way or the other by the global slowdown.

5 Regional groupings play an important role in helping countries weather the inevitable economic storms. For countries straddling the Indian Ocean, there exists an alphabet soup of regional forums that include APEC, BIMSTEC¹, ASEAN, EAS, GCC, EAC², AMED³ and the COI⁴. But I am sure not many may have heard of IOR-ARC.

¹ Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Co-operation.

6 It is a pity that IOR-ARC is not so well-known because it has made positive contributions to this vast region which we live and work in. Since its founding in 1997, IOR-ARC has brought together officials, academics and businessmen from Africa, the Middle East, South Asia and Southeast Asia together. Seen in this context, the IOR-ARC process is a continuing journey to strengthen our historical and civilisational links and an important framework to foster closer regional cooperation in times of prosperity and adversity.

7 I wish therefore to pay tribute to the many unsung heroes in the IOR-ARC Secretariat who have worked hard to organise the various meetings and workshops. Just last month, I had the pleasure of meeting Secretary-General Ambassador Bhagirath in Singapore, and I assured him of Singapore's commitment to the IOR-ARC.

8 We had a fruitful discussion on the various proposals drawn up by the Secretariat in line with the six key areas of interest that was decided by the Council of Ministers last year at Bangalore.

9 I am happy to inform the Council of Ministers that Singapore will be organising courses on academic co-operation, trade and investment facilitation and disaster risk reduction for IOR-ARC member states in 2013 under our Singapore Co-operation Programme – or SCP. These courses are in addition to the wide spectrum of courses we have conducted over the years. Since our SCP started in 1992, more than 15,600 participants from IOR-ARC countries have participated in these various courses.

10 The point that I wish to make is this: we cannot afford to take economic growth for granted, and as countries located in the vast Indian Ocean Rim, we share a common and equal responsibility to help each other grow and thrive in an increasingly competitive and uncertain global environment.

11 I hope the Council of Ministers will bear this goal in mind, and I look forward to a meaningful exchange of views and opinions. Thank you.

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² East African Community

³ Asia-Middle East Dialogue

⁴ Indian Ocean Commission – known by its official French acronym *Commission de l'Océan Indien*.

SOUTH AFRICA

Draft Statement by Deputy-Minister Ebrahim General Debate: 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers

**Chairperson
Your Excellencies
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It is my pleasure to represent South Africa at this 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. Minister Nkoana-Mashabane expresses her deep regret in not being able to attend today's meeting, but asked that I kindly convey her warmest wishes to your Excellencies representing IOR-ARC Member States here today.

On behalf of my delegation, may I take this opportunity to thank the Government of India for its warm hospitality and excellent arrangements for the hosting of this meeting. It is also wonderful that this dynamic city of Gurgaon was chosen in which to host this meeting, affording us this opportunity to have a glimpse of what this great country has to offer.

Excellencies,

Please be assured that South Africa is keen to continue to work with the Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the other Member States of the IOR-ARC, in our quest to strengthen our organization in order that it may begin to address issues that affect the lives of millions of people living in our region.

It is interesting to note that the theme for this year's Council is "IOR-ARC – 15 Years Old and the Decade Ahead"

While we will agree that fifteen years in the life of an organization like IOR-ARC, it is not sufficient to enable us to make any judgement, in view of the complex nature of the issues involved and the need to build consensus. However, it does provide an opportunity to take stock of what we have been able to do together, to possibly make some adjustments where necessary and to also reflect on the various present and emerging challenges that we face.

Looking back, we must pay tribute to our foresightedness in establishing the IOR-ARC. While progress has sometimes been slow, the changing geopolitical and natural environment of the past fifteen years have catapulted the Indian Ocean region back into the prominent position it held many centuries ago.

Those of us charged with the responsibility of building bridges need to collaborate more closely with each other and with our international partners in achieving our objectives. We cannot function in isolation and must therefore seek further avenues for collaboration with each other.

Since the launch of IOR-ARC, the world has experienced major changes and the challenges ahead are daunting. We are confronted with a worldwide financial crisis and a gloomy economy outlook. There is also a paradigm shift in the balance of global economic power with the emergence of new global players and drivers of change. This has major geo-strategic and geo-political implications.

Moreover, many of us are faced with problems associated with climate change, rising food and oil prices and the ongoing challenges relating to piracy in our region. These challenges underscore the need to constantly build and strengthen resilience and have a more effective coordination of our common development efforts. In spite of the great disparity in the levels of development of our countries, we need to map out a vision of economic cooperation to enhance trade and investment.

The scope of the IOR-ARC has expanded over the 15 years of its existence. Members are willing to cooperate today in areas like Science and Technology, Education, Health, Transport and Maritime Security, There is, no doubt, that increased regional trade within the IOR-ARC region, if pursued properly and equitably, offers the prospects of stronger economic growth through greater regional cooperation and integration. We need also to mobilise the support of our private sector and our Dialogue Partners, in this endeavour.

We should regard our organization as a vehicle for the transformation of the lives of the peoples of this region. Our diversity and plurality offers immense possibilities. South Africa is committed to engage with its partners and see this Association make tangible progress to unlock regional opportunities and deliver positive outcomes. We are all committed to this responsibility and look forward to cooperating with Member States to achieve our common goals.

Excellencies,

You will recall at our last meeting in Bengaluru, this Council requested that South Africa extends the term of secondment of Mr Vish Badal, who was then on secondment from South Africa to the Secretariat in Mauritius. South Africa is committed to the strengthening of the Secretariat in order that it may be effective in implementing the mandate of this Council. To demonstrate our support and commitment to the IOR-ARC programme and activities, I am pleased to announce that we have taken your request one step further and South Africa has agreed to the secondment of Mr Graham Anderson for a period of four years. Mr Anderson commenced his duties at the Secretariat from 1st September this year and will be fully sponsored by the South African Government.

Excellencies,

As we explore the way forward for IOR-ARC, we must recognize Africa's potential as a "swing continent", through leveraging its natural geo-strategic location in respect of being positioned in the middle of the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, could provide the impetus for new geo-economic emergence and positioning in the emerging new world order. You will recall that upon a request from this Council, the Secretariat provided its report regarding Observer Status for IOR-ARC at UNGA. I believe that we should now also consider Observer Status for IOR-ARC at the African Union as well. Many Member States continue to develop important trade and economic relations with an emerging Africa. I therefore propose that we explore the possibility of seeking, as a first step, an Observer Status with the African Union.

Chairperson, I believe that the various reports that will be presented to us today by the representatives of the different Working Groups will contain positive suggestions on the way forward. May I therefore take this opportunity of thanking the Committee of Senior Officials for their recommendations emanating from both yesterday's CSO meeting as well as their Bi-Annual Meeting that took place earlier this year in Mauritius. Let us all come together and work together for a better future to secure our beloved planet, including its rich resources such as the Indian Ocean, in the interest of humankind and also notably for our future generations.

Excellencies, in concluding I am sure my colleagues will agree that this organization must be well resourced and there is a political will to ensure that we are effective in achieving our goals. I do hope that we will have some time to deliberate on whether we are adequately resourced.

I thank you.

TANZANIA

**STATEMENT BY HON. DR. ABDALLAH OMARI KIGONDA (MP),
MINISTER FOR INDUSTRY AND TRADE AND HEAD OF
DELEGATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA TO
THE 12TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE
INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION (IOR-ARC)
GURGAON, HARYANA PROVINCE, REPUBLIC OF INDIA, 02ND NOVEMBER, 2012**

**Honourable Shri. Salman Kurshid, Minister of External Affairs of the Republic of India,
Chairperson of the Council of Ministers**

Honourable Ministers;

Heads of Delegations of the Committee of Senior Officials,

Distinguished Delegates,

Dialogue Partners,

Invited Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset I would like to express my profound gratitude and sincere appreciation through you Honourable Minister Kurshid, to the people and Government of the Republic of India for the warm reception and generous hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this Cyber City of Gurgaon in the Province of Haryana. Tanzania has hopes on your recent appointment by your Government and wish this 12th Council Meeting fruitful deliberations.

Mr. Chairperson,

We wish to thank the Republic of India, the Chair for hosting this meeting and its continued determined efforts aimed at realizing the objectives of this august body. We also congratulate the Government of Australia, the Vice-Chair for working together with the Chair in providing leadership and moving the Association's development agenda.

Tanzania appreciates the good work by the Secretariat under the able stewardship of the Secretary General, Ambassador K.V. Bhagirath. We thank you for your exemplary work of strengthening the Secretariat and coordinating Member States' projects and programmes.

Lastly we thank the Committee of Senior Officials and relevant working groups and forums for a job well done in producing the report that will be tabled before us for discussions.

Mr. Chairperson,

I need not belabor on the relevance of the Indian Ocean Rim Association to its Member States as well as the World at large. Despite the challenges that we face, it is my firm conviction that together we can overcome them if we concentrate our energies and efforts to effectively moving our objectives and agenda forward.

Since the establishment of our Association, tremendous progress has been registered in the implementation of various decisions and recommendations in areas of Business Forum, Trade and Investment, and academic Affairs. However, we need to speed up implementation of identified projects by Member States by moving away from slow processes.

Mr. Chairperson,

Tanzania is happy to note that a sister nation Comoro has applied for Membership to our Association. Last year, this Council, unanimously welcomed back our sister nation of Seychelles.

Undoubtedly, no Sovereign State today can live in isolation given the dictates of global concerns. We therefore commend Comoro's decision to join this august body and its readiness to cooperate with us for mutual benefits. We look forward to working closely with both of them.

Mr. Chairperson,

Tanzania would like to thank all Member States of this august body for recommending further action on the proposal by Mozambique on Sustainable Aquaculture and Artisanal Fisheries. Likewise, we thank all Member States who have shown interest in our Concept Note regarding **Enablement of Tanzania Nationals to Access the EEZ Fishery**. Indeed, the cry by Tanzania is a common factor of all Eastern Africa Member States of this Association.

In this case, if the capacity of fishers is enhanced as requested firstly it will propel the cardinal agenda of poverty reduction through employment creation and income generation for our people and secondly they will increasingly access fishery resources of our EEZ which are by license now wholly and exclusively exploited by Distant Water Fishing Nations. I therefore, request Member States to accept this Concept Note to be developed to a fully-fledged project.

At this juncture, I would like to thank graciously the Sultanate of Oman for their readiness to provide technical support in this area, including development of a bankable project. May I also, thank the Sultanate of Oman for the resolve to sponsor a Workshop on Sea Cucumber Farming scheduled to take place in Zanzibar in the near future.

Mr. Chairperson,

At its 11th Council Meeting held in Bengaluru in November 2011, this Council approved six priority areas of co-operation namely; fisheries management, maritime safety and security, trade and investment facilitation, disaster risk reduction, science and technology, tourism promotion and cultural exchanges. I therefore urge the distinguished Member States to make best use of the approved priorities for the economic development of our nations.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would like to state that, the United Republic of Tanzania stands firm in its commitment to closely cooperate with the Chair, the Secretariat, Member States as well as other relevant stakeholder of the IOR-ARC in our joint efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth and development in the Indian Ocean Rim.

I wish you fruitful deliberations.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION.

THAILAND

24 October 2012

**Statement by Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand
Mr. Navin Boonseat
at the 12th Council of Ministers Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim
Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC)
2 November 2012
Gurgaon, Republic of India**

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

May I first begin by joining my colleagues in expressing my gratitude to the Government of the Republic of India for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. My special thanks also go to the IOR-ARC Secretariat for their hard work in support of our association.

Excellencies,

IOR-ARC is a unique regional forum, comprising countries from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. The diversity of its membership and the complementarities of their strengths should be an asset that would help reach our association's untapped potentials.

We welcome and commend India and Australia's leading role in revitalizing IOR-ARC cooperation. Their contribution in key areas of cooperation is well recognized by the member states. With our shared political will and close collaboration, I believe that this forum will provide an opportunity for all of us to fully utilize our shared economic potentials towards sustainable growth and balanced development in the region.

In this regard, **Thailand sees the importance of the active role of Dialogue Partners.** Meaningful interaction should be strengthened to enhance regional capacity building. Let me share our experience in cooperating with Development Partners under sub-regional frameworks such as Mekong – Japan Cooperation, Lower Mekong Initiative and Mekong – Republic of Korea. Thailand is working closely with various Development Partners to establish a network of collaborators for our development cooperation projects under a trilateral structure. Participation from Development Partners aims to help our region achieve its goal and support the implementation of our projects through provision of external sources of funding, insights and expertise. These Development Partners play a crucial role as co-drivers in moving forward the projects and activities of the relevant cooperative framework.

Indeed, a more focused and action-oriented approach is required if we were to make our cooperation more concrete and more relevant to the needs of member states. **There are some key priority areas of cooperation** that I would like to share with you.

First, since **enhanced regional connectivity** plays a vital part in our regional economic and social development, Thailand fully supports the development of port and harbor infrastructure in the region. We have committed to develop with the blessing of the Government of Myanmar the Dawei Deep Sea Port and Dawei Economic Zone. Once completed, it will link Dawei to Laem Chabang Deep Sea Port in Thailand, which will create a strategic land bridge linking the South China Sea with the Indian Ocean. Equally important, Dawei will create another strategic sea link between the Mekong Sub-region and India through Chennai Port. Perhaps we could take inspiration from this ongoing effort to explore the possibility of upgrading other aspects of the shipping infrastructure and logistic chains in the IOR-ARC region.

Second, on **maritime security**, Thailand has actively participated in regional and international fora such as the ASEAN Maritime Forum, International Maritime Organization and the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia. Like others, we believe that to effectively address piracy, we need to address the problem at its root causes, be they poverty, instability or the lack of capacity. We also hosted a number of regional workshops and seminars to promote sharing of best practices and experiences among member states. Furthermore, Thailand is considering providing training for Somalia's law enforcement agencies.

Third, another issue that we can work closely is **fisheries**. The IOR-ARC Fisheries Support Unit in Oman can be an effective mechanism in supporting the exchange of know-how as well as promoting trade, research and management in the field of fisheries. I am delighted that we are now in the process of developing a draft Action Plan of the Fisheries Support Unit. We propose that the issues in the Action Plan should include extraterritorial fishing, maritime safety for fishing boat operations and aquaculture.

Fourth, on **trade and investment**, greater participation in trade fairs, exhibitions, business activities will help increase trade and investment among us. It is essential that we promote regular exchanges of information relating to trade and customs regulations in order to facilitate a favorable business and investment environment among the IOR-ARC countries.

In this regard, I wish to highlight the importance of the private sector and public-private partnership. We all recognize the vital role of entrepreneurs and private industries in promoting trade, investment and tourism services trade. While we as governments welcome enterprises to help boost economic growth, the business sector needs our support to ensure a smooth run.

I therefore support the idea of having a **dialogue between IOR-ARC Ministers and the business sector** to ensure that we hear about innovations and changes in rules and regulations that can facilitate business activities. At the same time, businesses can hear some of our views on issues like CSR and sustainable development.

Furthermore, we should focus on **enhancing private sector competitiveness**. Thailand would like to draw attention to the importance of building capacity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). This is not only needed for them to better meet global challenges, but also to ensure that with globalization, the gap within economies does not grow wider. In other words, we should grow together and sustainably.

Lastly, given the **rising threats of natural disasters** in the region, it is necessary to closely coordinate and expedite our works on this matter. We may consider setting up an efficient mechanism to react to such emergencies. At the same time, networking of regional centres should also be strengthened to promote effectiveness. The Asian Disaster Preparedness Center or ADPC in Thailand could help share its experience and expertise in building awareness and training on early warning and disaster management, especially in the area of Community Based Disaster Risk Management. Moreover, we should explore the possibility of developing a partnership between the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance and other disaster management centres in IOR-ARC countries to enhance the overall capacity of the region to respond to natural disasters.

Excellencies,

As an active and responsible member of the international community, Thailand is committed to playing a constructive role in the IOR-ARC. On behalf of the Kingdom of Thailand, I would like to express our willingness to work with all Member States and Dialogue Partners in order to accomplish our common goals for the sustainable development and shared prosperity of our region.

Thank you.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

**Statement by H.E. Dr. Anwar Mohamed Gargash, State Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
United Arab Emirates at the
12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC in Gurgaon, India on 2 November
2012**

Mr. Chairman,

The United Arab Emirates would like to announce a contribution of USD 500,000 to the Association's Special Fund. We believe in this mechanism and felt that it will further enable our Association to increase its effectiveness and reach.

The United Arab Emirates, in partnership with International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), offers to host the first Renewable Energy Forum of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation in Abu Dhabi during the 2013. This high-level Forum will provide an opportunity for Government officials, policymakers, and project developers to showcase both investment opportunities in their markets and targeted government interventions to establish supportive and sustainable frameworks for renewable energy towards meeting their energy requirements

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

YEMEN

Statement by H.E. Dr Abu Baker Al-Qirbi
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Head of the
Delegation

Republic of Yemen

12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers
(COM)

Gurgaon, Republic of India

2nd November 2012

***Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

I cannot start my intervention without first congratulating your Excellency for your appointment as foreign minister of this great country India. And I look forward to work with you to promote the bilateral relations between our two countries.

It gives me great pleasure to attend this 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation which is convening in Gurgaon. On behalf of my delegation, I must express our deep appreciation to the Government and people of India for the preparation for our meeting in this beautiful atmosphere. and warm hospitality and we also extend our thanks to the Secretariat senior officials for their hard work in preparing for our meeting.

I would like to welcome the new membership of the Union of Comoros and I am sure it will play a positive role in our organization. We are encouraged by the joining of the US as a dialogue partner as it indicates the US realization of the importance of this group and to provide its support for our organization.

***Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

Again Yemen would like to congratulate the Republic of India for Chairing the IOR-ARC during the last year, a period in which the association witnessed significant progress.

I would also like to thank the government of India for its one million \$ contribution to the special fund.

Furthermore, the constructive participation of our Dialogue Partners in our meetings demonstrate the willingness of all our stakeholders to work together to achieve tangible results in our mission to improve the lives of ordinary people in our region.

I am sure we are all encouraged by the progress made by our organization although there is more work to be done to make it an active forum for greater economic and technical cooperation by governments and private sector as well as exchange of experts the more we focus on this and less politics the more likely we are to achieve our goal and create stronger bones between our countries.

There is no doubt that the organization will depend on leadership, innovative thinking and programmes as well as adequate budget. Our success will lead to the protection and better neutralization.

One subject that needs to be embraced in this meeting is the plight of poor fishermen as a result of our concern for maritime security. Thousands of fishermen in Yemen have their source of substance by abandoning their fishing for fear of being attacked by naval ships in suspecting them as pirate boat. This has resulted in the lose of lives of several fishermen and over 200

million \$ of revenue for Yemen. I hope our organization will look at way to deal with this and make the countries responsible of this accountable.

***Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen***

The Fisheries Support Unit, the Maritime Transport Council, the Regional Center of Science and Transfer of Technology, the Preferential Trade Agreement, and our progress in initiating Trade and Investment opportunities, deserve the support of all Member States. It is critical that these projects be regional in character and this can only be done if we have the broad participation of our Member States.

Yemen is ready to do whatever it can to strengthen the Association and to improve the level of its cooperation with IORARC and proposes the establishment of a traditional fishing resource unit in Yemen, to promote and enhance fishermen's abilities.

***Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,***

May I take this opportunity to wish our Honorable Council of Ministers every success for this meeting.

I thank you.

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Remarks by
H.E. Director General Lu Shaye
at the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers' of the
Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)
Gurgaon, 2 November 2012**

Your Excellency Minister Khurshid,
Your Excellency Secretary General Bhagirath,
Distinguished Heads of Delegation,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's an honor for me to attend the 12th Meeting of the Council of Ministers' of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) on behalf of the Chinese government. Let me extend warm congratulations on the 15th anniversary of the IOR-ARC. I'd also like to convey our sincere gratitude to the Indian Government and the Coordination Secretariat of the Association for their hard work for this meeting and warm hospitality to all the delegates.

The 15 years of the IOR-ARC's evolution has demonstrated the strong aspirations of the Indian Ocean Rim countries to seek development through unity and prosperity through cooperation. Since its establishment in 1997, the IOR-ARC, as the sole economic cooperation organization of the region, has been steadily promoting institutional building, actively pushing forward cooperation between member states in trade and investment liberalization, science and technology, culture, infrastructure and other fields, and continuously strengthening coordination and cooperation between its member states in international and regional affairs. It has become a stabilizer for peace and security and booster for prosperity and development in the Indian Ocean Rim region. Just now, we have listened attentively to the chairperson's report by Minister Khurshid and the opening remarks by Secretary General Bhagirath, and are sincerely happy for the achievements the Association has made over the past year. We are confident that with the joint effort of the IOR-ARC and all its members and dialogue partners, greater success will be achieved in its institutional building and mutually beneficial cooperation.

Today, the underlying impact of the international financial crisis continues to haunt us. Countries are experiencing economic slowdown, and the downward risks in the global economy are not to be underestimated. At the same time, inter winning conventional and non-conventional security factors and persisting hotspot issues are bringing new challenges to world peace and development. With an important geographic location and distinctive advantages in resources, market and culture, the Indian Ocean Rim region enjoys a rising position and a bigger role in the international arena. The members and dialogue partners of the IOR-ARC should make full use of the effective platform provided by the Association to actively cope with various security challenges, enhance economic and trade cooperation, resolutely oppose protectionism in all its forms with concrete action, upgrade trade and investment facilitation, build a more open and free regional trading system, and contribute more to peace and prosperity of the region and early and steady recovery of the world economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since becoming a dialogue partner of the IOR-ARC in January 2000, China has enjoyed growing friendly relations with the Association. We have sent delegations to all the Ministers' Council Meetings and kept active exchanges and cooperation with the IOR-ARC and its members. We have also made contribution to the growth of the Association within our capabilities. In recent years, trade between China and IOR-ARC members has shown a dynamic momentum. In 2009, 2010 and 2011, the two-way trade accounted for 15.7%, 16.4% and 17.3% respectively of China's total foreign trade, and reached US\$633.17 billion in 2011, registering a year-on-year growth of 30%. China is having FTA talks with many IOR-ARC members, which will further contribute to a more open and liberal regional trading system. IN the field of science and technology, China is seeking cooperation with IOR-ARC members in fields such as desalination of brackish sea water and wastewater treatment through the IOR-ARC Centre for Science and Technology Transfer. Besides, China has sent 12 naval fleets to the waters off the Somali coast on escort missions and carried out cooperation with some IOR-ARC members in fighting piracy in order to safeguard security of the shipping lanes in the Indian Ocean.

China respects the purposes of the IOR-ARC, supports its goals and priorities in cooperation, and is ready to work with its members and other dialogue partners to further strengthen communication and cooperation in fields such as Maritimes safety and security, trade and investment facilitation, culture and education, science and technology, fishery and disaster mitigation, and enhance mutual support and coordination in international affairs. I'd like to take this opportunity to announce on behalf of the Chinese government that the Chinese side has decided to contribute US\$ 100, 000 to the IOR-ARC on the occasion of its 15th anniversary as a way to express our support to the Association and sincere wish to deepen mutually beneficial cooperation with the Association and its members. We hope this contribution will facilitate the development of the Association and the smooth implementation of its cooperation projects.

To conclude, I wish the 12th Council of Ministers' Meeting a complete success.

Thank you.

FRANCE

**Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation
12th Council of Ministers Meeting
Gurgaon, Haryana, 2nd November 2012**

Prof. Frédéric CADET
Head of the French delegation and
Vice-president of the Regional Council of La Reunion

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank the Government of India for the invitation, its warm welcome and for the excellent organisation of this IOR-ARC Council of Ministers, which France is very pleased to attend.

France is willing and ready to work with the IOR-ARC and all the members of this important Association.

Although France's mainland is unquestionably located in Western Europe, we are also unquestionably an Indian Ocean Rim State. As a matter of fact, two French *départements*, namely La Reunion Island and the Island of Mayotte, are in the Indian Ocean. Over 1.1 million of our citizens call those Islands home, and their challenges and opportunities are overwhelmingly the same as those of their neighbouring countries.

In that regard, our Government strives to facilitate and encourage the cooperation of La Reunion Island and the Island of Mayotte with their Indian Ocean neighbours as well as their progressive integration in the region in order to meet our common challenges, and to achieve better benefits for the people in the area. It's for that reason that the French territories in the Indian Ocean, including La Reunion Island and the Island of Mayotte, have been granted specific powers to develop international relations with their neighbouring States.

La Reunion is playing a very active role promoting and developing regional cooperation in many areas, including health and science, biotechnology, climate change and meteorology issues, fishery resources management, the development of ocean based technologies for renewable energies, tourism and ICT.

I'm very honoured that our Government has appointed me as vice-president of the Regional Council of La Reunion, to lead the French delegation once again to this assembly.

The progressive integration of La Reunion and Mayotte in their local environment is high on France's agenda. We have, over the years, developed mutually fruitful relations with not only nearby countries, including Madagascar, Mauritius, The Comoros, Seychelles, South Africa and Mozambique, but also with other member States of IOR-ARC, in particular India and Australia.

Excellencies,

The Indian Ocean is facing important challenges, which will define our common future, including the protection of biodiversity, preventing and fighting maritime piracy as well as maritime pollution, fisheries management, and natural disasters preparedness and response. But more importantly, these challenges can be turned into great opportunities, provided that we work together and mobilise all of our available resources.

The Indian Ocean has traditionally not benefitted from much consideration and recognition. The creation of the IOR-ARC was the right response to that situation, and we are very confident that this Organisation will develop its full potential in the next few years. We are also very committed to work together for that purpose.

Therefore, as France is also an Indian Ocean Rim State, we would like to see our current status of “dialogue partner” enhanced to that of an “associated member”.

On this point, I would like to emphasize that France is fully committed and prepared to take on that responsibility, especially since France already plays an important role in some vital issues in the Indian Ocean. For example, France is contributing in securing commercial navigation in two ways: through its participation in the European Union Naval Force of the coast of Somalia, also known as the “Atalanta Operation”, and through its own navy patrol in the South of the Indian Ocean. Furthermore, France is an effective member of the Indian Ocean Commission.

For all these reasons, we are looking forward to working closely with the IOR-ARC and its Chair in the future.

Thank you for your attention.

UNITED KINGDOM

Statement by Ms. Julian Evans, Deputy High Commissioner in New Delhi

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all I would like to thank the Government of India for their kind invitation to be here today. And may I add my congratulations to HE Mr Salman Khurshid on his assumption of the post of Minister of External Affairs of India?

Since the meeting Chair has mentioned cricket perhaps I can say that we of course hope, and expect, that our team will indeed have a very pleasant stay on Indian shores.

I am conscious that I am occupying an awkward position here in that I am almost the last speaker standing between delegates and their lunch, so I will be brief.

The United Kingdom is proud to be a dialogue partner in the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation

The British Indian Ocean Territories remain an important reason for UK interest in the working of the Association. As do the trade and security partnerships that the UK has with members of the Association. A strong and cooperative Indian Ocean community is in all our interests. The UK supports the Association taking incremental and practical steps toward greater regional cooperation based on shared values and norms.

India's chairmanship has given purpose and direction to the Association. The UK supports the six priority areas of cooperation identified at the previous conference in Bengaluru. We are confident that Australia will continue this good work in identifying the areas where cooperation can take advantage of the opportunities and address the challenges.

One such challenge is piracy. We are working closely with partners in the region, whether that be through our bilateral support to the Seychelles in tackling the symptoms of piracy – where I know that India is also closely involved – or through our support to UN agencies delivering on the ground in Somalia to help tackle the root causes of piracy.

We continue to take a leading role in international efforts, including through the Contact Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia, which has over 65 participating nations and more than 25 international organisations represented, many of whom are also members of the IORARC

This collaborative approach has produced results. The reduction in pirate activity that we have witnessed in the last 12 months, and which other delegates have mentioned, is testament to the enduring commitment of the international community to tackle piracy and its causes head-on.

We recognise that the work of the international community has been effective because it has been coordinated, and in close cooperation with regional partners. We therefore encourage the Association to continue to coordinate its efforts with relevant international and regional organisations.

The United Kingdom will remain committed to supporting our partners in the Indian Ocean community.

Thank you.

INDIAN OCEAN RESEARCH GROUP (IORG)

IORG OBSERVER REPORT TO IOR-ARC GURGAON, FRIDAY 2ND NOVEMBER 2012

Thank you Mr Chairman for this unique opportunity to address this important gathering.

As many of you will know, the Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG), which is a social science policy-oriented research network, and which was founded in Chandigarh in November 2002 (it is our 10th Anniversary next week), became an official Observer to IOR-ARC at the meeting in Sanaa in Yemen in 2010.

I would like to raise three principal issues very briefly on IORG activities, past, present and proposed.

1. General Indian Ocean Research Dissemination and Publication

Since becoming an Observer, IORG has launched its flagship Journal, *Journal of the Indian Ocean Region*, (JIOR), (<http://www.informaworld.com/rior>), which is published twice a year by Routledge in the UK, and the Journal is now in its third year of publication.

It may be of interest for delegates to know what the policy themes have been of the issues of the Journal to date:

- (i) Maritime security in the IOR (June 2010),
- (ii) IO climate change (Dec 2010),
- (iii) Geopolitical orientations of IO states (June 2011),
- (iv) the changing role of external powers in the IOR (Dec 2011),
- and (v) IO regionalism (June 2012).

The issue in press is on the theme of piracy in the IO (Dec 2012).

In the next 12 months, we hope to take JIOR to the next level, especially by revising the Editorial Board and by including new items of interest to IOR-ARC members, including regular Reports and Commentary in IO policy issues and on meetings such as this.

We are completely open to suggestions that members might wish to make about possible future themes, issues and format of the Journal. For example, major speeches by member states on IO regional issues are always welcome additions. Please contact me direct if you have any ideas, questions or concerns.

For our part, we will continue to explore new research areas in the form of themed Journal issues on regional topics of common concern, plus Conferences and book publications over the *next* 10 years.

IORG is strongly committed to the long-term expansion of an Indian Ocean network of Centres and Scholars in order to expand the scope for research and teaching collaboration in the Region.

2. Building an Indian Ocean Region

This is one of IORG's principal research projects, and, among other things, is concerned with facilitating a sense of "IndianOceanness".

IORG has been very fortunate during this Gurgaon meeting to work closely again with our Kenyan colleagues and others from the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) to finalise the arrangements to hold a major international Conference in Nairobi in July 2013.

The theme of the proposed Conference is 'The political economy of maritime Africa in the IOR' and is a revision of a proposal which we introduced and which was approved at the IOR-ARC meeting in Bangalore in November 2011.

We would like to take this opportunity of sincerely thanking the Kenyan delegates at this meeting for taking the lead on this important issue and for helping to reformulate and improve the original proposal.

We would also like to sincerely thank all of the original 'donor' states – Australia, India, Sultanate of Oman, South Africa and Sri Lanka – for their vision and assistance and for their continued support.

Some of the issues which will be discussed at the Nairobi meeting are outlined in my very brief essay in the Commemorative Magazine produced for this IOR-ARC meeting. However, in brief, the Nairobi Conference will be organised around three principal themes:

- (i) Africa's perception of and linkages with the IO;
- (ii) Indian Ocean state linkages with Africa; and,
- (iii) Future opportunities to develop stronger linkages.

We intend to send out the First Circular for this meeting to all IOR-ARC Academic Focal Points by early January 2013. However, if any member would like to know more before then, please do not hesitate to contact me direct by email.

3. Possible future IORG functions for IOR-ARC

Third, and finally, the Indian Ocean Research Group remains open to any suggestion on how we might contribute further to the enhancement of the goals of IOR-ARC. Please get in touch with me if you have any ideas or comments on this issue.

Thank you Mr Chairman

Professor Dennis Rumley
Chair, IORG
Email: rumley8@gmail.com