

**IOR/8COM/REP/08/06****General Debate – Statements by Ministers/ Dialogue Partners States****Statement by**

**Mr Paul Tighe  
First Assistant Secretary  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade  
Australia**

Thanks Islamic Republic of Iran for its hospitality for this 8<sup>th</sup> Com and the work of Secretariat and the Executive Director in organising the event.

Australia, as one of the founding members of IOR-ARC 11 years ago, continues to be committed to the organizations and offer support to its development.

Australia would like to see IOR-ARC focus on a small number of practical and key projects to be completed by the organization to enable it to demonstrate progress and build confidence in the organization. To use a cricket term, may be not familiar to all here today, to enable IOR-ARC “to get some runs on the board “.

In particular, Australia is interested in focusing on the Fisheries Support Unit and perhaps one of two projects in other priority areas of the organization. Australia sees important benefits to be gained through cooperation in this area as it is the Indian Ocean which unites IOR-ARC diverse membership.

**STATEMENT BY**  
**MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, HIS EXCELLENCY SHRI. E. AHAMED**  
**Ministry of External Affairs MER Division**

**REPUBLIC OF INDIA**

**8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF IOR-ARC, IRAN, TEHRAN**

**4 MAY 2008**

Mr. Chairman

Honourable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your warm words of welcome and convey my deep appreciation to the Government and people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the gracious hospitality extended to me and the members of my delegation and for the excellent arrangements made for our meeting here. It is indeed a pleasure to be among friends.

2. I would like to thank our colleagues for the strenuous efforts they have made over the last few days to prepare ground for this meeting. The recommendations they have made for our consideration are practical and result oriented. New strategies have been devised to carry forward our common vision for mutually beneficial cooperation. Though a 10 year life would have justified a Summit in normal circumstances, here it is premature to think of a Summit. We need to have a certain direction and consolidation first.

3. In the past on year, I find a candid review and appreciation of the ground realities of one decade of IOR-ARC's existence has been made. It needs to be provided greater substance. There needs to be concrete shape and direction given to the grouping.

4. We are a diverse group of countries, coming from different geographical locations, different levels of economic development and belonging to different regional groupings. But then we have in common the Indian Ocean that sustains the maritime lifeline of over 50% of world trade and binds us together. We value the forum of IOR-ARC and attach importance to its potential. It is important to think ahead and have a long-term vision for the future of our cooperation.

5. I wish to place on record my delegation's high appreciation for the generous financial contribution Mauritius has made in the running of the Coordinating Secretariat at Port Louis and the performance of the Executive Director, Ambassador T Z A Samsudeen, in running the affairs of the Secretariat. The 3-4 year Action Plan prepared by the Secretariat is very exhaustive and I am sure a lot of thought and effort has gone into it. I would at the same time appreciate the Working Group Meetings of our Heads of Mission in South Africa which has facilitated in providing a forum for pursuing IOR-ARC matters.

6. I shall, at this stage, not go into the details of the issues that would come up for deliberation during the meeting. I am sure we shall have scope for substantive discussions later.

7. I feel our concerted efforts to make the grouping active would be successful when we come up with tangible proposals based on our complementarities and common goals. In this context, I would like to mention that only those projects which can be sustained and would add value and are unique to this grouping, should be taken up and moved actively forward.

8. To achieve this goal, it is important that sectoral working groups/ with countries opting to lead in specific sectors, should be established over and above the Academic Group, Business Forum and Trade and Investment Working Groups concurrently functioning. The studies or projects that have already been identified and are likely to continue may be brought under the respective sectoral groupings 'for better coordination. These sectoral working groups should report to our Senior Officials. This would be in addition to the meetings of the Heads of Missions in Pretoria. The studies or proposals which are more than ten years old and have not translated into viable projects should be scrapped with the consent of the member country.

9. Areas of common interest that are binding the Indian Ocean Rim countries, such as ocean bed exploration, hydrographic survey, disaster management and information sharing, shipping, coastal infrastructure, fisheries, weather forecasting should be given priority. I am aware that the prime focus of this grouping is developing trade and economic cooperation. But there are other foCa in which member countries are engaged in trade and economic facilitation and engagement. Our idea should be not to duplicate those efforts but bring on board in their grouping projects which are unique to such an organization and which will be sustainable and have a larger footprint in the region. An expert group of officers from Foreign Ministries and nodal Ministries of member countries should meet at least twice before the next Ministerial meeting to identify areas, develop concrete projects and give directions to move forward. The Executive Director of the Secretariat has a very vital role in implementing the ideas into successful cooperation of IOR-ARC countries.

10. I am happy to reiterate the announcement made by my Prime Minister during the recently held India-Africa Summit in New Delhi in April 2008, to extend Duty Free Tariff Preferences Scheme for Least Developed Countries which gets extended to some of the IOR-ARC member countries as well.

11. I would like to thank IOR-ARC member countries for making the First IOR-ARC Film Festival, organised by my Ministry in partnership with Directorate of Film Festivals, in New Delhi in February-March this year, a great success. Ten films were screened at the Film Festival with the participation of Australia, Bangladesh, Iran, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Kenya, South Africa, Tanzania and India. The Directors of the Australian and Tanzanian Films participated in the inaugural and closing ceremonies and discussed possibilities of co-production of films with their Indian counterparts. In this connection, I would like to propose that IOR-ARC Film Festivals may be organized biannually which will bring together the talents of member countries and provide a platform for sharing of resources and cultures and eventually lead to joint production of films and marketing in the region. We would be happy to host the festival in different cities of India.

12. We appreciate the participation of IOR-ARC Member Countries, at the India International Trade Fair 2007 in November 2007. A Buyer-Seller Meet was also organized. I am glad that Mr. Samsuddin visited the Trade Fair and attended the closing ceremony of the Fair. I would appreciate if all the IOR-ARC member countries participate in IITF 2008 and make the event more successful by a much larger participation so that a dedicated IOR-ARC pavilion could be allotted. We once again offer 3 x 3 sq. mt. stalls free of cost to fellow developing countries, Bangladesh, Madagascar, Mozambique, Tanzania and Yemen.

13. Continuing with our efforts for strengthening of training, in high-level professional development programmes towards capacity building, I am glad to announce that specialised training courses have been designed keeping in view the commonality of this grouping, in the areas of "Disaster Risk Management including coastal and marine hazards", a Workshop-cum-training on "Maritime Cooperation among IOR-ARC countries" and Special Course on "Auditing in Information Technology Environment" under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme. Under the General Agreement agreed to by the UMIOR and Academic Group, wherein funding for 2 students per member country by respective countries has been proposed, we are glad to offer, in the first year of its implementation, a total of 36 scholarships under the Indian council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for postgraduate studies in India.

14. We appreciate the request received from the IOR-ARC Secretariat to train its staff on IORNET. In this connection, I am glad to announce that we shall offer training for Secretariat staff under the ITEC Programme as well as training on IORNET with FICCI.

15. A Specialized Training Course for Foreign Diplomats for IOR-ARC member countries is being organized by the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs, the details of which will be conveyed to the Secretariat in due course.

16. Mr. Chairman, you would agree with me that people-to- people interaction should play a vital role in making our grouping more vibrant. We should think of initiating activities which can give better visibility to our grouping in our own countries and beyond.

17. IOR-ARC established a "Chair" on Indian Ocean Studies since 1997. The interviews for selection to the post have been held by a Selection Committee from India and Mauritius. I am happy to learn that Prof. P.V. Rao, an eminent Professor from Osmania University, Hyderabad, India, has been selected for the post. I am sure, once the "Chair" is in place, the course of direction for identifying projects enhancing cooperation would be better addressed. Here I would like to stress upon the role which the Executive Director could play, in driving the organization forward. Therefore, the selection of the new Executive Director has to be diligently done involving all member countries in the process.

18. I am confident that we would be able to give a concrete shape and direction to the grouping. Let the meeting be a milestone in the organization's progress. Before I conclude, let me express Mr. Chairman, my delegation's full support and our commitment for the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation for mutual benefit of all our peoples so that we succeed in our efforts to translate our ideas into beneficial cooperation for peace, progress and prosperity of the region.

Thank you.

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**Statement from H.E. Primo Alui Joelianto  
Head of Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia  
at the General Debate**

**Meeting of the Council of Ministers  
of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation  
Tehran, 4 May 2008**

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

*Please allow me to use this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to Your Excellency and to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the most generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Tehran.*

*I would also like to extend our gratitude to H.E Manoucheher Mottaki for hosting this meeting. I do believe that under your able fosterage, our session today will produce fruitful result in strengthening cooperation among IOR-ARC members.*

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,*

*In this 11<sup>th</sup> Year of IOR-ARC we have noted that IOR-ARC Programs are various. However, we should focus on and intensify our implementation to the projects that we have agreed upon. Therefore, I would like to re-emphasize that future projects should be doable, practical, focused, have great multiplier effects, and involve a broad level of participation. Noting that IOR-ARC needs to show concrete progress in its cooperation, I believe that we should come up with projects that are well planed, visible, with details that are also well informed to all members and thus could produce maximum outcomes. The projects should also be in the area that the IOR-ARC members from three different continents with different economic systems could enjoy the benefit of the cooperation.*

*As we are all aware, trade cooperation is an important area that can be a significant factor in accelerating economic growth and has an ample of opportunities that can be further developed in this region. In this case we should therefore at the same time enhance the cooperation in the area of trade facilitation to reduce trade barriers and increase trade flow, which includes among others cooperation in financial sector.*

*Indonesia is also of the view that cooperation in the area of sharing best practice among member countries should become a focus of this cooperation. As we are all aware, most of member countries participated in this organization are developing countries with most of the people are still under poor economic condition. Having microfinance in our banking system for empowering our economic would be of benefit to be implemented in our countries. As Indonesia has been regarded to be one of many countries who has succeeded in implementing microfinance to move the economic engine, especially in coping the financial problem which hit Indonesia since 1997, it is our privilege to share our experiences on the practice of microfinance by sending our*

*experts in a proposed workshop to be held at the IOR-ARC Secretariat in Mauritius later this year.*

*Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,*

*We are now facing the world with rapid changes as an effect of globalization. There are some challenges that we should faced outside. Cooperation in the field of economic and politics are not sufficient. As we came from different economic and political system, I believe that cooperation in the area of socio-culture should also be taking into account to strengthen our togetherness and to feel a sense of us and thus we could understand and help each other in facing those challenges. Having known each other cultures would make us feel as brothers. Therefore, cooperation in the field of Tourism and Education are among others would be areas that can be developed in our cooperation. Indonesia, on this regard, is pleased to support the cooperation in this area. We have Developing Countries Partnership Scholarship and Dharmasiswa Scholarship to be offered as tools to enhance relations and networking among us as well as creating generations that are ready to face this globalize world.*

*While we are streamlining and focusing our programs and work, we should also support the development of the IOR-ARC Secretariat as well as the tools which support IOR-ARC work programs. We are of the view that having a strong secretariat would help the development of projects that are ample and help the members to achieve the outcomes. As we know that the Secretariat has been our facilitator who coordinates all activities within IOR-ARC; and the IORNET.com has been a tool in our cooperation which could be a portal to commence dialogues and exchange information in a committed manner leading to an enhancement and deepening of cooperation among the IOR-ARC member countries. We should in this case, support the idea of strengthening our secretariat and make the best use of IORNET to facilitate our communication.*

*Above all, it is the members' task to support IOR-ARC's continuing efforts at developing capacity building measures and capabilities in all areas where IOR-ARC can add value. As a member of IOR-ARC, we should commit ourselves to create policies which are supportive to issues such as trade and investment facilitation, capacity building programs, transparency and behind-the-border regulations and administrative procedures.*

*I thank you, Mr. Chairman.*

**STATEMENT BY HON. MOSES WETANG'ULA, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS AT THE 8<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF IOR-ARC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS  
MEETING, TEHRAN, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**MR. CHAIRMAN, HONORABLE MINISTERS, DISTINGUISHED  
DELEGATES, EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

ON BEHALF OF THE KENYA DELEGATION I WISH TO TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO CONGRATULATE THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE IOR-ARC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS FOR THE EFFECTIVE FACILITATION OF THESE DELIBERATIONS. LET ME COMMEND OUR HOST, THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, FOR THE HOSPITALITY ACCORDED US AND THE EXCELLENT FACILITIES ARRANGED FOR OUR MEETING. THE GESTURE OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN IS TESTIMONY OF COMMITMENT TO THE SUCCESS OF OUR ORGANIZATION. ON BEHALF OF MY DELEGATION, LET ME ASSURE YOU OF OUR SUPPORT TO ENSURE A SUCCESSFUL SESSION.

**MR. CHAIRMAN,**

IT IS NOW MORE THEN A DECADE SINCE THE BIRTH OF OUR ORGANIZATION. THE OBJECTIVES FOR WHICH THIS ORGANIZATION WAS FORMED ARE AS VALID AS THEY WERE IN THE 1990S. OUR LONG HISTORY OF CONTACTS AND SHARED RESOURCES CONTINUE TO BIND US TOGETHER IN OUR ENDEAVOURS TO ATTAIN THE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR COUNTRIES. IN ADDITION, DEVELOPMENTS IN THE GLOBAL SCENE MAKE IT IMPERATIVE FOR US TO STRENGTHEN OUR COOPERATION TO BE ABLE TO MEET THE CHALLENGES AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE GLOBAL ARENA. IN THIS REGARD, WE SHOULD TAKE THE ADVANTAGE OF THIS SESSION TO PROPEL THE ORGANIZATION TO GREATER HEIGHTS AND ALSO EXPLORE WAYS IN WHICH MEMBER COUNTRIES CAN REAP MORE BENEFIT FROM OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE IN OUR COUNTRIES AND THE REGION IN GENERAL. A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES WITHIN THE RIM ARE FACED WITH NUMEROUS ECONOMIC CHALLENGES. THERE IS THEREFORE NEED TO CONSOLIDATE EFFORTS TO TACKLE THESE CHALLENGES.

THE CURRENT TREND IN THE WORLD'S ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ORDER NECESSITATES COUNTRIES WITH COMMON VALUES, ASPIRATIONS AND UNDERSTANDING TO STRATEGICALLY APPROACH ISSUES COLLECTIVELY IN ORDER TO DERIVE MAXIMUM BENEFITS. THIS IS MORE SO IN THE FACE OF DEVELOPMENTS SUCH AS THE EVER CHALLANGING GLOBALISATION AND THE EXISTING GLOBAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ARCHITECTURE. IT IS ON THIS BASIS THAT WE STRONGLY BELIEVE THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION CAN BE USED AS A PLATFORM ON WHICH WE THE COUNTRIES WASHED BY THE INDIAN OCEAN WATERS CAN MAXIMIZE POTENTIAL BENEFITS. IT IS THEREFORE A CHALLENGE TO ALL OF US TO ENSURE THAT THROUGH OUR INDIVIDUAL AND COLLECTIVE EFFORTS, THE IDEALS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION ARE OUR DRIVING FORCE IN OUR ENDEAVOUR TO SUSTAINABLY EXPLOIT THE POTENTIAL WITHIN THE INDIAN OCEAN AND OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES.

MORE THAN TEN YEARS SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THIS ORGANISATION, WE HAVE NOT MADE MUCH PROGRESS TOWARDS OUR OBJECTIVES. IN THE PAST OUR ORGANISATION HAS MOSTLY DWELT ON INFORMATION GATHERING. WE SHOULD THEREFORE MOVE FAST AND ENTER THE IMPLEMENTATION PHASE. WE WELCOME THE DECISION OF THE 7<sup>TH</sup>

COUNCIL MINISTERS DIRECTING THE SECRETARIAT TO DEVELOP A 3-4 YEAR PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE IOR-ARC. THE PROPOSED PLAN OF ACTION WILL BE USEFUL IN GUIDING THE WORK OF THE SECRETARIAT AS WELL AS THE MEMBER STATES. THE PROPOSED PLAN SHOULD FOCUS ON CREATING AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT FOR COOPERATION IN THE REGION RATHER THAN ENGAGING IN SPECIFIC PROJECTS. CONSULTATIONS AND PREPARATION OF THE PLAN SHOULD BE MORE COORDINATED TO ENSURE THAT ALL MEMBER STATES VIEWS ARE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.

**MR. CHAIRMAN**

IN RECALLING DECISIONS REACHED DURING A MEETING HELD IN COLOMBO, THE COUNCIL AGREED TO IMPLEMENT AN INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AIMED AT STRENGTHENING THE IOR-ARC SECRETARIAT. IT WAS AGREED THAT A NUMBER OF INSTITUTIONAL ADJUSTMENTS BE PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF IOR-ARC. THE SECRETARIAT SHOULD BE COMPOSED OF SKILLFUL, EXPERIENCED AND DYNAMIC PROFESSIONALS COMPETITIVELY SOURCED FROM AMONG MEMBER STATES. KENYA IS READY TO WORK WITH OTHER MEMBER STATES TO MAKE THIS A REALITY. IN THIS REGARD WE HAVE LOOKED AT A PAPER DEVELOPED BY THE DELEGATION OF AUSTRALIA WITH VERY USEFUL RECOMMENDATIONS THERE-IN. I AM SURE THIS COUNCIL WILL FIND FAVOUR IN ADOPTING STRATEGIES AND PROPOSALS CONTAINED IN THE PAPER. HOWEVER, IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT IN SPITE OF SOME DIFFICULTIES THE CURRENT SECRETARIAT HAS DONE A COMMENDABLE JOB. WE SALUTE THE OUT-GOING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MR. SAMSUDEEN HOWEVER, THERE ARE VARYING CHALLENGES INCLUDING MOVING THIS ORGANIZATION TOWARDS PROGRAMME AND RESULT ORIENTED ACTIVITIES.

WE COMMEND THE GOOD WORK BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE WORKING GROUP OF HEADS OF MISSION BASED IN PRETORIA. KENYA PROPOSES THAT THE WORKING GROUP BE RECOGNIZED AS AN INTERSESSIONAL COMMITTEE TO FOLLOW UP IMPLEMENTATION OF DECISIONS MADE BY THE ORGANIZATION.

THE WORKING GROUP SHOULD ALSO BE ENTRUSTED WITH THE DAY TO DAY ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL DECISION MAKING FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

**MR. CHAIRMAN,**

THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION HAS TREMENDOUS POTENTIAL FOR TRADE AMONGST OUR COUNTRIES. WE NEED TO EXPLOIT THESE OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH REMOVAL OF BARRIERS TO TRADE AND EMPOWERING OUR BUSINESS PEOPLE. THE INITIATIVE TO ESTABLISH A PREFERENTIAL TRADE AREA IS A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. HOWEVER IT IS THE VIEW OF MY DELEGATION THAT A STUDY SHOULD BE DONE FOCUSING ON FEASIBILITY OF THE PTA AND POTENTIAL CONFLICT THAT MAY ARISE DUE MEMBERSHIP IN OTHER FREE TRADE ARRANGEMENTS. IT IS TRUE THAT MOST COUNTRIES WHO ARE MEMBERS OF IOR-ARC BELONG TO ECONOMIC GROUPS WHO ARE FAST PROGRESSING OR ARE ALREADY CUSTOMS UNIONS. WHAT WE NEED TO BE CONSCIOUS OF IS THAT, THOUGH MEMBERSHIP TO CUSTOMS OR FREE TRADE GROUPINGS IS ITSELF GOOD, THIS ORGANIZATION STILL HAS A LOT OF SPACE AND PROMISING POTENTIAL FOR FURTHER TRADE AND RESOURCE EXPLOITATION OPPORTUNITIES. OUR TRADE SHOULD BE FACILITATED TO MOVE FREELY AND WITHOUT VISA RESTRICTIONS AMONG MEMBER STATES.

**MR. CHAIRMAN,**

THE REALIZATION OF THE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSOCIATION CAN BE BETTER ACHIEVED THROUGH INVOLVEMENT OF THE CRITICAL PLAYERS IN ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. WE SHOULD THEREFORE STRIVE TO ATTRACT THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN OUR INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES IN IOR MEETINGS. IN ADDITION, PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENTS ARE AN IMPORTANT CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT. OUR ORGANIZATION SHOULD COME UP WITH INITIATIVES

TO ATTRACT INVESTMENTS BOTH WITHIN AND OUTSIDE INDIAN OCEAN RIM TO INVEST IN OUR COUNTRIES AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE LARGE MARKET. THE VAST MARINE RESOURCES AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY ARE AREAS WORTH CONSIDERING. OUR TECHNICAL TEAMS ON TRADE AND INVESTMENTS SHOULD WORK HARDER TOWARDS THIS END.

**MR. CHAIRMAN,**

THE COUNTRIES OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ARE AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DEVELOPMENT. SOME OF OUR MEMBERS HAVE MADE GREAT STRIDES IN DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY. AS COUNTRIES SHARING A SIMILAR VISION WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO MUTUALLY SHARE THESE ADVANCES FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE REGION. WE SHOULD EXPLORE WAYS OF SHARING TECHNOLOGY THROUGH TRANSFER ON FAVOURABLE TERMS AND COOPERATION IN RESEARCH AS WELL AS EXCHANGE OF BEST PRACTICES.

COOPERATION IN EDUCATION IS ONE AREA WHERE WE COULD REAP MORE BENEFITS. WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO UTILIZE THE LARGE CAPACITY WE HAVE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN THE REGION. THIS CAN BE DONE THROUGH COOPERATION AMONG OUR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND EXCHANGE PROGRAMMES. HOWEVER, FOR THE EXCHANGE PROGRAMME TO BE FEASIBLE THERE IS URGENT NEED FOR THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING TO COME UP WITH PROPOSALS ON A WORKABLE CREDIT TRANSFER POLICY, WHICH WILL ENSURE GREATER FLEXIBILITY IN LEARNING AND QUALIFICATION PROCESSES. IT WOULD BE OUR JOY IF THIS COUNCIL WOULD ENCOURAGE MEMBER COUNTRIES TO OFFER LEARNING AND TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES TO STUDENTS BY AGREEING TO CHARGE LOCAL OR DOMESTIC RATES. THIS WOULD RAPIDLY SATISFY OUR SHARED DESIRE FOR EFFECTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND SKILLS TRANSFER. WE THEREFORE URGE THE ACADEMIC GROUP TO CONTINUE TO EXPLORE WAYS OF MAKING THIS POSSIBLE.

**MR. CHAIRMAN, EXCELLENCIES, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,**

THE SUCCESS OF IOR-ARC AS A REGIONAL ORGANISATION WILL DEPEND ON THE DEGREE OF ENTHUSIASM WITH WHICH WE THE MEMBER COUNTRIES WILL COOPERATE IN ACHIEVING THE TARGETS OF THE ORGANISATION. WE FURTHER REITERATE THE NEED FOR ENHANCED COHESION AMONG MEMBER COUNTRIES FOR THE SAKE OF A STRONG AND FORMIDABLE ASSOCIATION IN THE CURRENT DYNAMIC GLOBAL ARENA.

**THANK YOU.**

**Statement by****H.E. General Ranjeva Marcel, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Madagascar**

Mr Chairman,  
Honourable Colleagues,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me, first of all, to report the apologize from our Minister of Foreign Affairs, H.E. General Ranjeva Marcel. Due to other responsibilities that H.E. has in charge in the country, he could not join us. H.E. wish full success for our meeting.

Secondly, allow me to express my sincere appreciation and my gratitude to the Government of Iran for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangement extended to the Malagasy delegation since our arrival in Tehran.

Mr Chairman and Honourable Colleagues,

We had just celebrate the tenth anniversary of our association last year, many efforts have been made during this period, for the development of each other; so my congratulations go to all of us and I wish continuous success to our Association for the coming years.

As far as development is concerned, we all know that many sectors are involved to ensure the economy growth of our respective countries. Having a common view inside a regional association like IOR ARC helps us to achieve our goals. However, some factors like the global warming or climate change, still threaten our region. It is permanently exposed to natural disasters, resulting in thousand of homeless and starving people, leaving our countries' economy shattered.

Those situations have a negative impact on our economy and social life: trade, investment, tourism, health. Efforts must be set up in national and regional level. For Madagascar, the MAP (Madagascar Action Plan) is the national policy used to accelerate and better coordinate the development process. It is a five year plan establishing direction and priorities for the Nation's progress, stating the commitments and strategies.

Last and not the least, I would like to thank our Association for having encouraged Madagascar, to organize activities in view of attracting investors as well as tourists.

I wish full success to our Meeting.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY**  
**HIS EXCELLENCY AMBASSADOR**  
**SYED MUNSHE AFDZARUDDIN,**  
**AMBASSADOR OF MALAYSIA TO THE**  
**ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**AT**  
**THE EIGHTH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**  
**OF MINISTERS OF IOR-ARC**  
**TEHRAN, IRAN.**

**SUNDAY, 4 MAY 2008**

His Excellency Manoucher Mottaki,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me express my gratitude and appreciation to His Excellency, Foreign Minister Manoucher Mottaki, and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting as well as for the gracious hospitality accorded to the Malaysian delegation. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey the best wishes of the Honourable Datuk Seri Utama Dr. Rais Yatim, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia to you, Your Excellency, and of his hopes for a successful 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean-Rim Association for Regional Cooperation.

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. IOR-ARC at its inception had raised our hopes and promises of stronger ties and cooperation in many areas in our region. Malaysia for its part remains convinced that despite the many challenges confronting us, we would be able to fully capitalise on the vast potentials and opportunities inherent to our region. With the commitment, and political will, of all IOR-ARC member countries, we will be able to achieve a lot more. In this regard, I am confident that under Iran's stewardship and with the commitment of all present here today, this 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting will provide fresh impetus to all of us to move forwards in enhancing the bonds of friendship and cooperation in various areas of mutual interests among members of IOR-ARC at all levels and in all sectors.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

3. We can derive satisfaction from the deliberations carried out by the officials at the Working Groups and Senior Official Meeting over the past few days. They have discussed many important issues ranging from cooperation in trade, investment and education to administrative and budgetary issues, as well as ways and means to improve and strengthen the Secretariat.

4. We are pleased to note that the Committee of Senior Officials has adopted the 4 years cycle Action Plan that provides policy guidelines on the 6 priority areas identified for the Association. We hope that the Action Plan will provide the much needed framework to IOR-ARC members on how we can achieve the Association's medium and long term goals.

5. Malaysia continues to hold the view that if we are to expect any measure of success, we should focus and concentrate on practical projects and initiatives that can bring benefit to all member countries. We also maintain that participation and financial contribution to such projects and initiatives should continue to be voluntary as this would enable member states to actively participate in areas of interest to them, and where they can contribute not only in term of funding, but also in term of expertise, in accordance with their ability and capacity.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Malaysia at the last meeting had expressed our readiness to take the lead in furthering exchanges in teaching, learning and research-intensive activities for the Association. In this regard, we are pleased to invite IOR-ARC member countries to participate in the IOR-ARC Higher Education Collaboration for Academic Convention to be held in Kuala Lumpur in November this year. University Kebangsaan Malaysia will be the focal point for organizing this conference together with the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We would like this Convention to be the platform for us to explore and discuss the formation of the proposed Center for Multilateral Education which we hope could cater for the needs of the IOR-ARC member countries. We are also confident that this Convention would be a catalyst for many

important collaborative activities among higher education institutions in IOR-ARC member countries in our efforts to further develop our human capital, which is so central to our socio-economic progress and development.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. Malaysia would like to take this opportunity to express our heartfelt appreciation and thanks to the outgoing Executive Director, Ambassador TZ Samsudeen for his tireless efforts and exemplary work in the Secretariat, and in helping to develop IOR-ARC into what it is today. We will miss him, and we wish him well and the best in all his future undertakings.

8. Malaysia is supportive of the effort to improve the effectiveness of the IOR-ARC Secretariat. We believe that a high performing secretariat regardless of funding levels would require a strong, dynamic leadership as well as clear mandate from member states. The Secretariat must also be able to communicate regularly and effectively with member states. In this regard, Malaysia feels that the recommendations contained in the paper submitted by Australia on this matter would be a good starting point for discussion.

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

9. It is important that we maintain our trust and confidence in the goals of IOR-ARC. As we all know, IOR-ARC has been designed for all member states to participate through cooperation at the regional level. It is therefore crucial that we use the Association to gain more fruitful cooperation between the countries and peoples of our region. Malaysia would like to see IOR-ARC as a successful regional endeavour and we are always ready to extend our cooperation to our partners in the Association towards this end.

10. Malaysia is confident that this 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers would be a turning point for all of us to move forward to expand and strengthen our collaboration and cooperation for our mutual benefits.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY THE DEPUTY MINISTER OF SOUTH AFRICA, MR AZIZ PAHAD  
TO THE 8TH IOR-ARC MEETING IN TEHRAN, IRAN ON 4 MAY 2008**

Chairman

I wish to thank the Islamic Republic of Iran for the excellent hospitality and organisation of this meeting.

I wish to also congratulate Minister Motaki for his leadership of the IOR-ARC over the last three years. Today there is a greater sense of the importance of the IOR-ARC and we have taken a more realistic approach to the opportunities and challenges we face in the IOR-ARC.

Today's deliberation reflects a sense of dynamism and commitment to ensure that the IOR-ARC exploits the immense possibilities to the full.

When we established the IOR-ARC we were acutely conscious that the Indian Ocean is the world's third largest ocean. It carries half of world's container ships, one third of the bulk cargo traffic and two third of the world's oil shipments. It is a lifeline of international trade and economy. The region is woven together by the trade routes and commands control of the major sea-lanes.

The IOR constitutes between a quarter and a third of the world's population (close to two billion) which makes it a massive market. It is rich in strategic and precious metals, other natural resources and valuable marine resources. It is abundant in agricultural wealth in terms of the variety and mass of arable land and has significant human resources and technological capabilities.

This morning the First Vice President gave us a good interpretation of the challenges humanity faces. Since our last meeting all of us have to confront some new problems.

- 1 The world economic crisis
- 2 The devastating effects of the climate change and the serious food crisis
- 3 Energy crisis

Economic co-operation is a very important element of our organisation. In this respect we commissioned three studies

- 1 Barriers to the trade in the IOR-ARC
- 2 Benefits of trade liberalisation
- 3 Impediments to foreign investment in the IOR-ARC

We must give special attention to the conclusions of these reports and take the necessary measures to implement the recommendations.

I am pleased that following our decision last year the Secretariat produced a 3 – 4 year 8 Point Plan of Action. This document was discussed by the Working Group of Heads of Missions. They identified some priority projects, interalia,

*Fisheries*

We welcome Oman's initiative to host a meeting of experts in May 2008. South Africa will make a financial contribution. [\$6000] to Oman's initiative.

*Energy sector*

South Africa and Iran will initiate a project on "Investment, trade, technology and development of energy."

We appeal to members to contribute your expertise to this study.

*Tourism*

We welcome Oman's initiative to produce a feasibility study.

*Banking*

Other issues of importance.

*Centres of Excellence*

We welcome the Islamic Republic of Iran's announcement that they will soon operationalise the Centre on Science and Technology.

We must urgently identify other priority centres of excellence. These are essential institutional frameworks to deepen and enhance our co-operation for the mutual benefit of all our members.

South Africa welcomes the Secretariat's document "Strengthening of the Secretariat and the establishment of national focal points."

We also welcome the proposal for a cluster approach [co-operation with dialogue partners, inter alia, FOCAC, TICAD] IOR-ARC projects relations with other international initiatives e.g. NAASP.

We leave this meeting with a greater sense of the importance of the IOR-ARC. Clearly we have taken the necessary steps to prioritise our projects and we welcome the offer of member states to offer greater assistance and expertise in various fields.

We will return to South Africa and ensure that the IOR-ARC becomes an important element of our government private sector and civil society's agendas.

## Statement by

### **Minister of Foreign Affairs of Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Hon Rohitha Bogollagama**

His Excellency Mr. Manouchehr Mottaki, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran & Chairperson of IOR-ARC

Distinguished Colleagues,

Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I wish to begin, by extending my congratulations to the Islamic Republic of Iran as Chair of IOR-ARC for successfully directing the course of our Association, over the past three years. Mr Chairman, your dedication to the work of the Association, and continued interest in its progress, is indeed heartening. I take this opportunity to convey the warm felicitations of my colleague the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Sri Lanka, Hon Rohitha Bogollagama and his sincere wishes for a successful outcome to this Meeting.

I wish to thank Iran for the warm welcome and generous hospitality accorded to me, and my delegation. The close interaction that our two countries share was enhanced with the State visit of H.E. President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Sri Lanka last week.

Sri Lanka has maintained a keen interest in the work of IOR-ARC^ having hosted two of the Council sessions and one of our countrymen serving as the Executive Director of the Association. We are therefore deeply committed to the work of IOR-ARC and interested in seeing it develop into a successful regional integration effort. I wish to take this opportunity to share with you some thoughts on the future direction of IOR-ARC as Sri Lanka perceives it.

Several significant steps have been taken under the able Chairmanship of Iran and we are seeing, the culmination of these steps today. The strengthening of institutional mechanisms that has been done in the past three years is crucial for the future of the organization.

The Working Group of IOR-ARC Heads of Mission, has met, three times and held an Extra Ordinary Meeting during the past year in South Africa. They have deliberated among others, on two key issues, namely, the functioning of the IOR-ARC Special Fund and the Action Plan of the Association. These ideas have developed to the extent, that we have before us an opportunity to finalise matters related to them. Particular attention, should also be given to putting in place within our own respective national systems, and mechanisms to monitor the progress of activities undertaken by each member country and as a group collectively. The proposal to establish a tripartite IOR-ARC National Focal Points Committees in each member state, therefore, must be looked at carefully. I am happy to note that, there is, agreement among member countries on the need for a realistic Action Plan to streamline the activities of the Association.

Our intention to adopt the "principle of clustering" (four plus one countries) and of being more project driven are two proposals, that have developed considerably since being proposed at the session in Colombo. The institutionalization of the Troika with authority to decide on matters of urgency in between Council Meetings has also proved to be useful in dealing with administrative matters of the Association.

Mr Chairman,

You would agree however, that much more remains to be done. Any organization, as it enters its second decade in existence must consider in some detail the progress that has been made. You would recall that the purpose of establishing this Association was mainly to foster economic cooperation and integration among member countries. It was also formed to ensure that the benefits of globalization and liberalization, would be reaped by all the member countries. Time and money are being invested by member countries, for the

upkeep of the Association in the belief, that the benefits of this exercise would accrue to the peoples of the member states.

Mr Chairman,

Permit me to bring to your attention an extract from the remarks made by the late Hon Lakshman Kadirgamar, the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka who chaired the Council of Ministers' session in Colombo, in 2004. They are important to reflect upon, as they underline the importance of the political will. and commitment of member states in making this endeavour successful

I quote

“This organization belongs to the member States. They have built a valuable structure for cooperation with the inclusion of the academic and business communities. If the organization falters or fails, it will be because the member States had by default, let that happen.

Let us be frank with ourselves. Either the organization is worth preserving, in which case it is worth promoting and sustaining, or it must be allowed to wither away and die.”

Unquote

You would agree that no organization can move forward meaningfully, without consistent political support from member countries. We must display a constant commitment to the process. Sri Lanka believes that this commitment must be demonstrated consistently if IOR-ARC is to become a success.

I wish to thank you Mr. Chairman, for leading our sessions to a successful conclusion. Special mention must also be made of South Africa which has hosted the Working Group Meetings of Heads of Mission and Mauritius.

Last but not least, I take this opportunity to acknowledge the untiring efforts of the outgoing Executive Director Mr T Z A Samsudeen, in pushing forward the agenda of IOR-ARC, during his tenure.

I thank you.

**STATEMENT BY HONOURABLE DR. CYRIL CHAMI (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER FOR  
INDUSTRY, TRADE AND MARKETING OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Honourable Ministers,  
Distinguished Delegates,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Mr. Chairman**

Allow me first of all to commend you for the manner in which you are presiding over our meeting. I am hopeful that under your able chairmanship our meeting will be able to fulfil its mandate. Secondly, let me express my profound appreciation to the Government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for their hospitality extended to my entire delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Tehran. Let me also thank the Executive Director of IOR-ARC and his staff for the excellent preparations for this meeting.

I would like to align my initial remark with that made by the Hon. Minister from Kenya by observing that, it is ten years now since the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation was established. Ten years is a long enough period to make an evaluation on the success and failures of our Association with a view to giving it a fresh impetus.

It is regrettable that the Association has been able to register very modest success. These successes are in the area of studies that have been done on the potential that exists in our Region. These studies have gone hand in hand with the identification of a number of projects. However, it is a pity that the Association has so far failed to show any tangible results and progress especially in the implementation of projects that have been identified.

**Mr. Chairman,**

It is clear from my interactions with other delegations and even by listening to some of their statements, it is clear that there is a vivid and understandable frustration over lack of progress in our Association. If we continue along this painfully slow pace we will soon cease to be relevant. In view of the prevailing lack of progress, we member states need to recommit ourselves to the noble objectives for which our Association was founded in 1997. Indeed, we need to rediscover the enthusiasm and political will that characterised the birth of the IOR-ARC. If possible, let us involve our Heads of State and Government at some stage. It is also my delegation's considered view that one way of revitalising our Association is through pulling our resources together to undertake all those projects that have been identified and agreed upon.

I therefore appeal to all delegations to join me in calling for a resolution to move beyond rhetoric and embark on the path of concrete actions. To that end, I would like to suggest that we should here and today resolve to start the implementation of a few projects whose studies have been completed, commit resources to those projects and set time frames for their implementation. To this effect, my delegation would like to strongly support the proposal made by the Hon. Minister of Oman that we need to expand and strengthen our Secretariat. It is a strong Secretariat that will aid this organization in identifying those projects that we all yearn for. It is a strong Secretariat that will see to the projects' full and successful implementation.

Once again, thank you for your leadership Mr. Chair and thank you for your kind attention.

**Speech of the Republic of Yemen Delivered by H.E. Excellency, Dr. Abu Baker Al****Qirbi Foreign Minister 8<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting IOR-ARC Tehran - Islamic****Republic of Iran**

I hereby, present my utmost thanks and gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for the excellent arrangements and remarkable hospitality , since our organization was established in 1979 the geopolitical and economic importance of IOR-arc has noticeably increased /however within the past ten years few projects have been undertaken and does not realise the hopes and expectations of pour people and governments which reminds me of the American saying: WHERE IS THE BEEF!!

Today in the course of the 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Ministerial Council held in the beautiful city of Tehran ,We- Dear colleagues Ministers Foreign Affairs IOR-ARC should commit ourselves to much more readiness towards the implementation of what had been planned and agreed upon leading to full acheivemnt of our goals.

Partnership should be the firm basis on nwhich we build our co-operation ,it is of crucial importance that we all combine efforts in serving our coommon interests and observe them carefully as they are realised and accomplished.

As the coming Chair of the IOR-ARC Yemen is eager to take over its missions and pay its efforts in enhancing the effictiveness of the Association and will look at any suggestions on how to enhance our co-operation.

It is by your firm and constant support ;we could Mr Chairman , Distinguished Colleages achieve our goals and utmost aspirations ,serve our common interests for the benefit of our people.

Finally , Mr Chairman and as an expression of our support and commitment and to emphasize that credibility is obtained by action /we are pleased to present a contribution of (\$US 25000) for the benefit of the Special Fund to support the Association primary projects such as (FSU) of the Sultanate of Oman.

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