

**H.E. Mr. Kia Tabatabaee, Director General for Multilateral Economic Cooperation,
Islamic Republic of Iran
In the name of God, the Almighty**

**Honourable Mahinda Rajapaksa, the Prime Minister of Democratic
Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Lakshman Kadirgamar, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Democratic
Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

Ladies and Gentlemen

Colleagues and Friends

At the outset, allow me, Honourable on behalf of all the representatives of member states and of course, on my own behalf to express our sincere and heartfelt appreciation for the very warm hospitality extended to all of us.

During last two years, Sri Lanka as the Chair of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co operation has done everything in its power to promote and further the interest and objectives of our organisation and it is due to your relentless efforts that suitable grounds have been prepared for the future achievements.

The discipline and punctuality with which meetings of various Working Groups and Committee of Senior Officials were held is simply one of the indications of the organization of your team. We are profusely thankful for your leadership and guidance in this regard.

Presence and participation by your able and relevant senior officials at various meeting made the deliberation free flowing and contextual. This clearly show the political will of your Government in assisting this young grouping to graduate quickly and effectively.

The invitation from you, Honourable, aptly followed up by your team could catch the attention of all member countries represented here. I would urge my colleagues from all the member nations to shoe the same degree of earnestness in attending the sixth meeting of Council of Ministers and other related meetings to be held next year in Tehran, Iran.

I believe that at this stage we have to congratulate Sri Lanka for the great contribution she gas made to develop the organization of our grouping. Adequate time and energy has been put to this end. Now it is the high and right time to embark on the implementation of priority projects on a fast track basis. The organization developed at this stage laid appropriate ground for the project driven stage to boost the cooperation and image of our grouping.

At the end, Honourable, I do wish to take this opportunity and once again on behalf of all the member delegates and on my own behalf thank you for the excellent hospitality extended to all of us.