



**The 2<sup>nd</sup> IORA Blue Economy Core Group Workshop:  
Maritime Connectivity and Financing for Development in the Indian Ocean Rim**

**Qingdao-China, 13 – 14 July 2016**

**PRESS RELEASE**

The Government of China (The Ministry of Foreign Affairs), the University of Ocean University of China in collaboration with the Government of South Africa (The Department of International Relation and coeopartion-DIRCO) and HSRC supported by IORA Secretariat organized the 2<sup>nd</sup> IORA Blue Economy Core Group Workshop on “Maritime Connectivity and Financing for Development in the Indian Ocean Rim Qingdao-China, 13 – 14 July 2016. The 1.5 track workshop was attended by Government representative, experts, academia of IORA Member States and Dialogue Partner from Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, Indonesia, India, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Somalia, South Africa, United Arab Emirates and IORA Dialogue partners China, and Egypt.

The workshop was the second out of the three workshops proposed by the South Africa under the IORA Blue Economy Core Group projects approved by IORA Council of Ministers meeting in Perth in 2014.

The workshop was the first exclusive IORA event funded by the Chinese Government from its financial contribution to IORA in 2015. The main objective of the workshop was to boost cross-Ocean blue economy cooperation among member states and dialogue partners of IORA in the region.

The two-day workshop discussed extensively issues on Financing of Ocean Economy Infrastructure particularly port and shipping; Economic Development Zone (EDZ) model in China as drivers for economic development, investment and trade; Capacity Building Programme for education and skills training in Ocean economy; and Opportunities enhancing cooperation between IORA and China.

The workshop was inaugurated by the Assistance Minister of Foreign Affairs, People's Republic of China H.E.Mr. Qian Hongshan. In his remarks Mr. Qian Hongshan reiterated China's commitment to strengthen its cooperation with IORA. China welcomed the initiative to deepen engagement of dialogue partners in IORA cooperation, particularly in developing blue economy cooperation in the region.

With the support of advanced technology, China has capacity and expertise in developing blue economy, particularly in the field of marine development. The participants of the workshop also had an opportunity to visit “Blue Silicon Valley of Qingdao”, and “Qingdao National Laboratory for Marine Science and Technology” the leading research center for marine science in China.

Representing the Government of South Africa, H.E Ambassador A Sooklal, Deputy Director General: Asia and the Middle East of DIRCO in his remarks praised the Government of China for being the host of the event. As the active dialogue partner and highly regarded advanced country in blue economy development, he expected that China's expertise and experience can be shared with IORA Member States in developing blue economy sectors in the region.

In the same vein, Mr. Firdaus Dahlan, the Director of IORA Secretariat also expected the workshop could come with tangible outcomes and recommendation on specific projects on blue economy to be proposed at the coming meeting IORA – Dialogue partners, scheduled to be held on 26-27 October 2016 in Bali- Indonesia.

Prof. Narnia Bohler-Muhller, Human Science of Research Center – South Africa, the Chair of IORA Blue Economy Core Group addressed the participants and highlighted the proceedings of the workshop.

**IORA Secretariat  
14 July 2017**