

PRESS RELEASE

TRADE EXPERTS MEET IN MAURITIUS TO REVIEW TRADE AND INVESTMENT PROGRESS

Mauritius, 31 January 2020: Trade experts and business leaders of the Indian Ocean Rim region came together this week to review the implementation of IORA's trade and investment Work Plan.

54 delegates from 19 of IORA's 22 Member States, Dialogue Partners France and Germany, and chambers of commerce and industry around the region attended the *IORA Experts' Meeting to Enhance Intra-Regional Trade and Investment*, hosted by the Government of Mauritius.

The meeting was opened by the Honourable Nandcoomar Bodha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius. "Great investment opportunities exist in several economic sectors in the region, including infrastructure development, recycling, pharmaceuticals, fisheries, and aquaculture and ocean energy", said Minister Bodha.

"There is vast potential in closer economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean Rim region, which has always been one of IORA's central objectives", said IORA Secretary-General Dr Nomvuyo Nokwe.

Professor Peter Draper of the University of Adelaide presented on a forthcoming study on trade integration dynamics in the region, supported by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

The meeting saw strong private sector participation with six chambers of commerce from around the region sitting side by side with government officials to propose updates to the Work Plan of the Working Group on Trade and Investment. Projects to promote implementation of the WTO's Trade Facilitation Agreement; reduce Non-Tariff Barriers; promoting Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs); supporting value chains; and profiling IORA at the upcoming Expo 2020 in the United Arab Emirates were discussed.

The meeting was attended by representatives of 19 IORA Member States: Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

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From left to right: Mr Sunil Boodhoo, Director, International Trade Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius; Honourable Nandcoomar Bodha, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius; H.E. Dr Nomvuyo Nokwe, IORA Secretary-General, Mr. Mohammad Alzaabi, Director of Trade Promotion, Ministry of Economy of the United Arab Emirates; H.E. Ambassador Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mauritius; and Mr. Recharad Moolye, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of Mauritius.



Delegates to the IORA Experts' Meeting to Enhance Intra-Regional Trade and Investment, 30-31 January 2020

IORA Secretariat
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