

**Statement by the Head of Bangladesh Delegation, H.E. Syed Shahed Reza,
Ambassador of Bangladesh to Kuwait and Yemen, at the Council of Ministers'
Meeting, 5 August 2010
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen**

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Thank you, Madam Chairperson, for giving me the floor. I am confident that under your able leadership and guidance our discussion today would further strengthen our cooperation within the members of IOR-ARC and bring momentum to the activities of our Association. I would like to congratulate the Government of Yemen for hosting this event, and also for the excellent arrangements made. We also thank you for the warm hospitality extended to us. I would also like to take this opportunity to convey the greetings of our Hon'ble Foreign Minister Her Excellency Dr. Dipu Moni to you all. She could not attend this important august gathering due to her prior commitments.

Madam Chairperson,

I congratulate the Republic of Yemen for the tremendous efforts made to infuse dynamism during the current Chairmanship. Also, the Secretariat and the Working Groups have worked very hard to implement important Ministerial decisions throughout the year. Allow me, Madam Chairperson, to extend our heartiest appreciation to them.

**Madam Chairperson, Hon'ble Ministers,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed encouraging to see that, over the years, the IOR-ARC has been gradually transforming into an action-oriented association reaching a commendable level of maturity. As rightly mentioned by the Hon'ble Deputy Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka, the Indian Ocean, world's third largest ocean providing passage to half of world's container ships, one third of the bulk cargo traffic and two thirds of the world's oil shipments, is a lifeline of international trade and economy. With a population of two billion people, the Indian Ocean Rim offers enormous opportunity for the IOR-ARC members to enhance trade and investment.

Madam Chairperson,

We are happy to note that the Trade Experts during their fourth meeting have finalized the provisions of PTA Framework Agreement and Terms of Reference for feasibility study on the IOR-ARC Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA). A preferential trade agreement among the members will be instrumental in promoting trade within the region. Bangladesh is ready to extend full support to the PTA Sub-Committee in finalizing the draft agreement. The Working Group on Trade and Investment has done substantial work on quarantine requirements for Animal, Plant Products and Food Inspection Requirements, compiling Investment Regimes, identifying areas of cooperation in Oil

and Gas sectors, fighting Avian Influenza and strengthening cooperation in the fisheries sector. These are very important steps towards achieving our common goals.

Madam Chairperson,

Strengthening the IOR-ARC Secretariat and its associated mechanisms is very important. We appreciate the Sub-Committee of Senior Officials for their tremendous hard work to finalize the draft charter. We welcome the final Drafts of the Rules of Procedure, Staff Regulations for the Secretariat and Financial Regulations for the IOR-ARC.

Madam Chairperson,

The distinguished members of the Academic Group have made substantial progress in their endeavour to attain excellence in research and education. University Mobility in the Indian Ocean Region (UMIOR) and the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT) offered excellent opportunity for us to further cooperation among the IOR-ARC members. Bangladesh believes that if we set our priorities in line with the deliberations of Academic Group, Business Forum and Working Group on Trade and Investment the goals can be easily achieved. The IOR-ARC projects, particularly the flagship projects – the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU), the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT), the Maritime Transport Council (MTC) must enjoy every possible support from all our members.

Madam Chairperson,

While we strive for securing economic growth, we must also take note of global environmental challenges. We are still faced with the fundamental challenge of lack of commitment by the developed world to mobilize resources and technology to mitigate the impact of climate change. The developed countries should come forward to take all their necessary efforts to solve the existing problems related to climate change and rescue us from the disaster, which we are facing all the time, as well as the adverse consequences, such as food insecurity, water scarcity, malnutrition and spread of climate sensitive health issues. These challenges would affect all of us. So, we must work together to overcome this problem.

Madam Chairperson,

We look forward to India's assumption as the Chair of IOR-ARC and welcome Australia's Vice-Chairmanship for 2011. We thank the Committee of Senior Officials for including Bangladesh as a member of the Governing Committee of the IOR-ARC Special Fund along with Madagascar, Malaysia, Iran, Oman and Yemen. Being a member of this committee, I can assure you that Bangladesh will be able to fulfill your expectations by discharging the responsibilities with sincerity and the trust which you have rendered.

Madam Chairperson,

We have the common goal of addressing poverty in our respective countries. IOR-ARC must serve as an active agent of change by contributing to the betterment of the lives of our people. With abundance of human and natural resources, raw materials, advance technology and geographical proximity, the potentials of the Indian Ocean Rim are immense. We envisage IOR-ARC as a vehicle towards producing tangible results that have a qualitative impact on peoples' lives. We are confident that if we work together we can easily reach our destination and achieve the desired goal of IOR-ARC.

**Madam Chairperson, Hon'ble Ministers,
Excellencies and Gentlemen,**

I thank you all for your patient hearing and allowing me to share my views with you. On behalf of my Foreign Minister and myself, I thank you, Madam Chairperson.
