

**STATEMENT BY H.E.AMB.MOHAMMED ABDI GELLO,
KENYA'S AMBASSADOR TO UAE, AS LEADER OF DELEGATION TO THE
10TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE IOR-ARC, HELD IN SANAA YEMEN
FROM 31ST JULY – 5TH AUGUST, 2010**

**Hon Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

At the outset I would like on behalf of the Kenya delegation express our sincere thanks to the host Government of Yemen for the warm welcome and gracious hospitality extended since our arrival in Sanaa'a.

Let me also acknowledge the commendable work done by the Executive director the Secretariat and working groups of IOR ARC in ensuring a successful convening of this important meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya voted yesterday, in a referendum on a draft new constitution. As a nation we were both anxious and excited about the election and the results of the voting. It is for this reason that I convey the apologies of the Foreign Affairs Minister of Kenya, Hon. Moses Wetang'ula who was not able to attend this meeting. He sends his best wishes to this meeting.

The Indian Ocean Rim was launched 14 years ago with the intent to strengthen economic co-operation among member states and more particularly on trade and investment. Our meeting here today is a manifestation of the fact that the objective and the focus of the organization are still valid.

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Ocean Rim member states share one common natural feature, the Indian Ocean. We share fish resources, sea transport, direct trade and cultural exchanges and more recently, security challenges posed by pirates operating in the region. The cooperative approach chosen by the IOR-ARC member states remain the best way of handling common challenges that we face while encouraging exploitation of the resources and opportunities presented by the Ocean.

Mr. Chairman,

Fishing in the Indian Ocean is an age old activity that has remained extremely important for each of the IOR – ARC member states. However, continued exploitation of this resource without a strategy to ensure sustainability will in the long run leave the member states and other beneficiaries vulnerable to the risks posed by inadequate stocks of fish,

fish products and the resultant effect on related industries. It is important therefore, that all IOR-ARC Member States commit themselves to support the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) initiative in order to foster efforts towards development of this sector for maximum benefit of Member States. In this respect, I wish to take this opportunity to thank the Sultanate of Oman for offering to coordinate the activities of the Fisheries Support Unit of the IOR-ARC. I equally urge all Member States of the IOR-ARC to support Oman in the efforts towards achieving this noble Goal.

Mr. Chairman,

As we are all aware, Marine Transport along the Indian Ocean is important in sustaining economic activities amongst countries bordering the Indian Ocean as well as their hinterland countries.

Whereas, the International Maritime Organization is responsible for regulating all maritime transport activities, it is important that we, as the IOR-ARC member states put in place mechanisms that will enable us share our capabilities and accordingly benefit from the maritime activities in the Ocean. The proposed Maritime Transport Council (MTC) of the IOR – ARC member states will go a long way in ensuring a safe and secure sea transport in the Indian Ocean. Kenya urges all IOR-ARC member states to lend unreserved support to this initiative and hopes that all necessary discussions will be completed to pave way its formation.

Mr. Chairman,

Any disruption of the Indian Ocean Maritime Transport system will remain an incredible threat to all countries dependent on this mode of transport. The presence of pirates and continuous attacks of ships along the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Eden remains the worst threat to free trade and investment in the region. In this regard, Kenya supports the efforts to combat piracy in our region. Kenya further appreciates the effort by Yemen and other stakeholders in this war. Kenya further calls upon countries of the Indian Ocean Rim to consolidate effort in supporting such initiatives as the ones undertaken by Yemen and Kenya both who are hosting regional maritime centers in ensuring a safe and secure transport system in the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Chairman,

Kenya believes there are still more potential for free trade within the region. In the last session of the council of Ministers, the Preferential Trade Agreement was discussed with a view to embracing it as one vehicle of exploiting this potential. There is need to conclude the feasibility study to establish the efficacy of a PTA arrangement as a suitable mechanism of exploiting the trade opportunities amongst the IOR ARC member states. I note that some member states of the IOR-ARC also belong to other regional organizations that would require the negotiation of the proposed PTA to be referred them.

Lastly, I would like to thank the outgoing Chair and vice chair for their able stewardship and further wish every success to the incoming chair, India and vice chair, Australia.

Thanks.