

## **GENERAL DRBATE – STATEMENTS BY MINISTERS**

### **INDIA**

**Statement by MOS For Human Resource Development,**  
**Hon'ble Ms.D. Purandeshwari**

**Tenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC, Sana'a,  
Yemen, 5 August, 2010**

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

I am happy to be here in Sanaa'a for the Tenth Meeting of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers. I thank our hosts, the Government and the people of Yemen for their cordial hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting. The Republic of Yemen has provided able leadership and guidance as Chair of IOR-ARC in carrying forward our cooperation in IOR-ARC. We also welcome the presence of Hon'ble Prime Minister of the republic of Yemen in our midst and greatly appreciate his thoughtful words.

2. We have a rich agenda before us. The Academic Group, Business Forum, Working Group on Trade and Investment and Senior Officials have discussed various issues and have submitted their recommendations for consideration. I thank them for their work. I also thank the Secretariat for their valuable support. The Working Group of the heads of Missions in Pretoria has also been useful as a forum for discussions and exchange of views among Members.
3. The Indian Ocean Region has a maritime tradition of several millennia. The importance of the Indian Ocean maritime trade and transport has grown in recent times. There is considerable scope and shared desire of enhancing cooperation among the Indian Ocean littoral states.
4. I am happy to learn that the draft of a revised Charter for IOR-ARC has been put in place, which we would consider today along with suggested changes in the Rules of Procedure, Staff Regulations and Financial Arrangements of IOR-ARC.
5. Some members have participated in the annual India International Trade Fair. I once again invite you to participate in the Fair this year to be held between 14-27 November in New Delhi. We would be happy to arrange business-to-business interaction for participants. A special IOR-ARC pavilion can also be set up if there is sufficient interest from members. I request you to convey interest in participation to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI), which is the nodal agency from our side for the IOR-ARC Business Forum.

6. FICCI has also invited IOR-ARC Members to participate in the 'Annapoorna World of Food India 2010' being held in Mumbai on 24-26 November 2010. The event provides an opportunity for the food and beverage industry for business-to-business meetings. We would be happy to see participation from IOR-ARC countries as in the past years.
7. The Ministry of Earth Sciences of India has formulated a programme to provide the fishing community with credible advisories on Potential Fishing Zones. These advisories can be provided to the Indian Ocean Rim countries. We are already cooperating with some IOR-ARC members in the field of remote sensing applications for fisheries and coastal zone management. We would be happy to cooperate in the areas of agro-meteorological advisory, tsunami and cyclone warnings, capacity building in the areas of weather and climate, and coastal and marine hazards management.
8. The proposed establishment of the Maritime Transport Council for IOR-ARC would contribute to enhancing maritime transport cooperation including in areas such as security and piracy, maritime pollution, search and rescue operations.
9. India has circulated a concept Note on culture to enhance cultural cooperation and people-to-people contact among member countries. We are thankful to Mauritius for supporting the Concept, and for the interest shown by other members to carry forward our cooperation in this area. We hosted an IOR-ARC cultural event in Kochi with participation of troupes from Bangladesh, Oman, Mauritius, Sri Lanka and India on the occasion of the arrival of replica of the 9<sup>th</sup> Century boat 'Jewel of Muscat' from Oman. I would suggest that we should have more such events.
10. We have been happy to cooperate with the IOR-ARC members in the framework of the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC). During 2009-10, over 700 nominees from 15 member countries attended various course in Indian professional and technical institutions. 13 member countries participated in the special course for IOR-ARC Diplomats at the Foreign Service Institute in May-June 2010. We had planned a one week course in 'Disaster Risk Management including Coastal and Marine Hazards' for IOR-ARC member countries in Chennai, which had to be postponed as very few nominations had been received. We would be happy to reschedule the course if there is interest among members.
11. India had offered secondment of a Director to the IOR-ARC Secretariat. The process of selection of a suitable officer for this is at an advance stage, and we hope to soon communicate the name of the officer identified for the post.
12. Mr. Chairman, before I conclude, I reiterate India's commitment to work with other members to make the IOR-ARC a vibrant organization and enhance our mutual cooperation for the common benefit of our peoples.

Thank you

## **SINGAPORE**

### **REMARKS BY MR ZAINUL ABIDIN RASHIEED, SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SINGAPORE, AT THE TENTH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS' MEETING OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM-ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION, 5 AUGUST 2010, SANA' A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**

- Thank Yemen as the Chair for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality.
- It has been 13 years since the IOR-ARC was first launched in Mauritius in March 1997. The organisation was initiated with the vision to promote growth and development of the region, with a special emphasis on economic cooperation among the countries along the Indian Ocean Rim.
- As a proponent of global free trade, Singapore had welcomed the formation of the organisation, which we had envisaged would help reduce barriers to intra regional trade flows among the Indian Ocean Rim countries.
- We have always felt that the diversity of the of the IOR-ARC member countries provides a range of complementarities which could be tapped. The diversity of the IOR-ARC also makes it an excellent platform for the Foreign Ministers to network and meet with their respective counterparts. As such, we are committed to playing a constructive and meaningful role in the IOR-ARC.
- Nonetheless, the IOR-ARC has yet to reach its full potential. The sheer diversity and geographical spread of its members make it a challenge to build up the mutual confidence and understanding that is necessary for the organisation to progress and flourish.
- It is thus necessary for us to constantly fine-tune the organisation's mechanisms, and to streamline the array of activities and projects that have so far been proposed by various members. A review of the IOR-ARC Charter is timely in this regard, as it will provide an opportunity to consolidate and to re-examine the goals and objectives that we had set out for ourselves and the organisation.
- That said, we should continue to be realistic about what the IOR-ARC can achieve in the short to medium-term. A regional forum like this takes time to develop.
- The identification of the three flagship projects, namely the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU), The Maritime Transport Council (MTC) and the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT), for members to focus on, is a step in the right direction.
- Getting a few successful projects going will help increase contact and interaction, gradually boost comfort levels and instil confidence. It will also highlight the relevance of

the organisation as a whole and lay the foundation for more substantive cooperation in the future.

- In the process, there is a need to be ruthless in dropping projects that do not have the endorsement of the majority of the members.
- In terms of what Singapore can contribute in the IOR-ARC per se, we continue to welcome member states to participate in our Singapore Cooperation Programme where we provide technical assistance in human resource training to many countries. Singapore has to date, hosted over 14,000 SCP participants from the various IOR-ARC countries.
- In addition to the SCP, IOR-ARC member states may also wish to tap on our development experience through our governmental outfit known as the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise (SCE).
- The SCE was formed jointly by the Ministry of Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore to respond effectively to the many foreign requests for us to share our development experience .The SCE operates on a cost-recovery basis and does not seek to make profit.
- Since its inception in 2006, the delivered more than 120 customised training courses to government partners all over the world. These include IOR-ARC member countries such as India, Mauritius, Tanzania and Oman.
- We look forward to working closely with colleagues to make steady progress in realising the objectives under the revised IOR-ARC Charter that would be adopted.

. . . . .

# **ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

**In the Name of the Almighty God  
The Statement of H.E.Mr. Sayed Amir Mansor Borgheai  
The First vice Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran  
In the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC  
5<sup>TH</sup> August 2010 SANA'A YEMEN**

**H.E.Mr. Abubakar Abdullah Alqirbi,  
Honorable Foreign Minister of Yemen  
Excellencies  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I wish to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the Government and People of Yemen, for excellent arrangement and warm hospitality.

**Distinguished colleagues,  
Respected audience,**

The third millennium started with hope and positive vision and human has become optimistic about the future. But unfortunately the inefficient international management system has not been able to materialize these objectives but on the contrary it has become root for emergence of new economic, political, social and cultural crisis. The recent financial and economic crisis, continuation of regional and international conflicts, expansion of insecurity and instability, increase of poverty and wider gap between the rich and the poor at the national and international levels and also emergence of crisis in family, which is main unit of the society, are only a few examples of this inefficiency.

**Excellencies  
Respected audience**

In such a conditions, expansion of joint and multilateral cooperation can be good solution in facing the challenges and problems.

The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation based on its philosophy and original objectives should play a constructive and efficient role in increasing capabilities and potentialities of the member countries and also to overcome the financial and economic challenges at the regional and international level. Despite the extensive efforts and fruitful steps taken by member states, unfortunately such huge capacity has not been utilized in a good manner.

**Distinguished colleagues  
And guests**

I am not going to repeat the points that my colleagues have already mentioned and I only suffice to refer to a number of important issues. Members of the Association can provide the road map

for getting out of the future crisis by full cooperation and consultations among themselves and based on their common principal to take long steps in promoting peace and brotherhood in the world. In other words, we can front runner of peace, justice and friendship in the world and set a good example of peaceful and fair activities to the international community.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to extend its full cooperation in this regard. We also fully ready to cooperate in various financial and economic areas and also in projects related to different environmental, tourist, new power generating technologies, exchange of skilled manpower and regulating the financial market within the framework of the Association.

## **Excellencies**

### **Respected audience**

The Islamic Republic of Iran renews its support of the new Charter and considers it as a step forward and in the right direction. The programs of the Association are not defined within the long term road map. Therefore the necessity for having a long program and plan of action is deeply felt. I think it is necessary to note that during the meeting of Council of Ministers in 2008 in Tehran, the plan of action of the Association was approved and six areas of trade, financing and investment, training and technology, fisheries, tourism, natural disasters and information technology were defined as priority areas for the Association. This document has clearly drowned the road map of the Association. I suggest that the implementation of this document to be in the agenda of the meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials and if it is necessary to update it in order to become a platform for the future activates of the Association.

Having a new Charter for the Association, necessitate its relevant bodies namely Business Forum, Academic Group and Working Group for Trade and Investment also to make structural reform in accordance with the needs of the Association. It is suggested that sub-committee for each of these organs to be formed and one of its members act as coordinating country.

So far there has not been the possibility for the Association to hold several meeting of Council of Ministers and Committee of Senior Officials every year, but there is need to make consultation and follow-ups regarding various issues related to the Association, I therefore suggest that Troika of the ministers and senior officials to hold consultative meetings on the sideline of the international meetings such as the UN general assembly. They can use these opportunities in order to review the progress of the plans and projects as well as exchanging views on important subjects of the Association.

I would like to announce the full support of the Islamic Republic of Iran from the activities of the Fisheries Support Unit, Regional Center for Science and Transfer of Technology Center and Maritime Transport Council. I take this opportunity to bring to the kind attention to the Council of the Ministers that the Islamic Republic of Iran has provided the building and paid all of the costs related to salary of the personnel, administrative facilities as well as providing the needed budget of the center for holding seminars, meetings and workshops during the past two years. The Islamic Republic of Iran strongly recommends that the other member states to come forward and share the cost and the budget of the Center.

I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to all member states who have contributed to the objectives of the association during the last year by carrying out projects, holding meetings, exhibitions and also training courses.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready do whatever it can to strengthen the Association and promote the level of its cooperation and also facilitate rapid and successful implementation of its plan.

I am confident that, the conference can bring about further success for multilateral cooperation among member states.

At the end, once again, I would like to extend my gratitude to the government and people of Yemen and in particular to His Excellency Abu Baker Abdullah Al-Qirbi, the Foreign Minister of Yemen for their efforts in hosting and excellent arrangement for the holding meetings and their contribution in materialization of the sublime objectives of the Association.

Wishing all the success and prosperity for all member states and their nations.

**SRI LANKA**



**SRI LANKA**

**10<sup>TH</sup> COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING OF  
INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION**

**August 05, 2010  
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen**

**Statement delivered by**

**Hon. Gitanjana Gunawardena M.P.  
Deputy Minister of External Affairs of Sri Lanka**

**Your Excellency, Dr. Abubaker Abdulla Al-Qirbi,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Yemen and Chair of IOR-  
ARC**

**Excellencies,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is indeed a great pleasure to be in Sana'a, the Republic of Yemen at the 10<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers Meeting of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation.

I must place on record our appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the excellent arrangements that have been made for this Meeting and for the gracious hospitality extended to me and my delegation during our stay in Yemen. I take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Yemen, outgoing Chair, for the leadership in steering the course of IOR-ARC during last two years.

I also wish to congratulate India and Australia on assuming the Chair and the Vice Chair of IOR-ARC respectively. I am confident that their stewardship would help us to achieve the objectives of our regional grouping for the greater benefit of our people.

The Indian Ocean is the third largest ocean. It carries half of the world's container ships, one third of the bulk cargo traffic, two thirds of the

world's oil shipments. It is a lifeline of international trade and economy. The Indian Ocean Rim with a population of about 2.5 billion makes it an attractive market.

Mr. Chairman,

It is with pride that I bring to your attention that, one year ago, the Government of Sri Lanka eradicated the scourge of terrorism from our shores. Sri Lanka had coped with the challenge of LTTE terrorism for more than three decades, the LTTE being the most dangerous and deadly extremist outfit in the world.

The dawn of peace in Sri Lanka has brought about opportunities for rapid economic reconstruction in our motherland. The Government of His Excellency President Mahinda Rajapaksa, is investing heavily in the reconstruction of the affected areas in the North and East and in the improvement of the national infrastructure.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka has been a committed Member State of IOR-ARC and since joining the Association, has hosted the Council of Ministers Meetings in 2003 and 2004 in Colombo.

Since the very beginning of the IOR-ARC, we have followed a tradition of promoting a tripartite dialogue for decision making. The partners in

this exercise are the government, academia, and the business community. In fact, the decision making process by the senior officials of the government has been well facilitated by the inputs received from the Academic Group and the Business Forum.

The Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG) has produced many reports and so has the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) suggesting various recommendations to move IOR-ARC forward. Therefore, the time is now opportune for us to take cognizance of these important suggestions and recommendations to make our regional organization more vibrant.

IORAG, for instance, submitted a report on a possible formation of a Clearing Payment Union for IOR-ARC. This report was jointly produced by the two focal points of IORAG in Sri Lanka and India and was submitted to the Ministerial Meeting in Oman in 2001. We should avail ourselves of the experiences of the Asian Clearing Union (ACU) & SAARC Payments Initiative, in order to take this dialogue further.

I strongly feel that there are areas where we can agree for “win-win” cooperation. Two areas come to my mind; firstly, IOR-ARC cooperation to enhance Intra-regional Tourism. Our region signifies unity in diversity. As such, it offers tremendous potential for tourism. An Indian Ocean package for tourism can cover Africa, Middle East, South and

East Asia and Australia. Individual member countries can benefit from such tourism.

One of very fundamental activities undertaken by the IOR-ARC is the voyage by the “Jewel of Muscat” the reconstructed 9<sup>th</sup> Century trade vessel. The vessel arrived in the Port of Galle on April 19<sup>th</sup> and left Sri Lanka on May 15<sup>th</sup> 2010. This particular activity has created tremendous interest in Sri Lanka public, including school children.

Secondly, IOR-ARC cooperation in combating Marine Pollution and Ocean related Disaster Management. The recent British Petroleum episode in the Gulf of Mexico has brought to the attention of the international community that marine resources are an inseparable component of the shared heritage of mankind. In this context, as the Indian Ocean is our common medium of connectivity, protecting and preserving the marine eco-system would be one of the priority areas.

Also, with the devastation caused by the Indian Ocean Tsunami in December 2004 and subsequent signs of underwater disturbances in the Indian Ocean, early warning system and disaster management have become crucial subjects.

Consequences of global warming are areas of concern for us. International research indicates that sea levels are rising unevenly in the Indian Ocean placing millions at risk along low lying coast lines. The

rising sea levels are said to be caused in part by climate change and triggered by warming seas. These are areas we can cooperate and share each other's experiences.

Mr. Chairman,

Ongoing regional cooperation projects within IOR-ARC of special interest to Sri Lanka, include cooperation in the fisheries sector, setting up of a Maritime Council and development of a compendium on investment regimes. Sri Lanka has presented its comments relating to the Instrument for the Establishment of the Fisheries Support Unit of the IOR-ARC.

We believe that it is necessary to promote sustainable exploitation of fishery resources. The danger of over utilization has now become a serious concern.

Sri Lanka looks forward to playing an active role in the proposed Maritime Transport Council (MTC) and also to establish a vibrant working relationship with the rest of IOR-ARC Member States.

We also need to take note of the growing security concerns on shipping and cooperate to strengthen the protection of shipping lanes vital to trade in our region.

Under the “Mahinda Chinthanaya”, vision statement for Sri Lanka of President Mahinda Rajapaksa, Sri Lanka has enhanced its maritime support services such as the extension of the Port of Colombo and the establishment of a new harbor in Hambantota which is in the south of Sri Lanka.

The Port of Hambantota is strategically located a mere 12 nautical miles north of major maritime/ trade route which will connect the East and the West in the Indian Ocean. The new Port will commence operations this year, and once fully functional, it will definitely be a catalyst in servicing and promoting maritime trade in the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Chairman,

The four key components of the IOR-ARC roadmap include trade liberalization, trade and investment facilitation, economic and technical co-operation and trade and investment dialogue.

Preferential Trade Agreement may be useful as a framework to enhance economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of all members while safeguarding the interests of member countries and we appreciate the work undertaken by the trade experts in this regard.

Sri Lanka welcomes the outcome of the deliberations of the Fourth Meeting of Trade Experts on the IOR-ARC Preferential Trade Arrangement, in mapping the work envisaged with regard to the

implementation of a framework for a PTA. However, given the slow progress in the negotiations of the PTA we find it is timely that the Group of trade experts, while working towards the finalization of the framework for the PTA should also explore other mechanism for the expansion of trade.

Sri Lanka notes with satisfaction the successful conclusion of the “Regional Experts Meeting on Herbal Medicine Processing” which was held in Teheran in June 2010. The initiatives taken at the end of the Expert Group Meeting would be a medium for strengthening cooperation in herbal medicine related technology among the Member States.

IOR-ARC today is well into its second decade. It is therefore timely that we undertake a realistic assessment of the opportunities and challenges faced by our Organization. The need is to collectively map out a strategy that can unlock the tremendous potential that is in existence within the Member States of IOR-ARC.

As IOR-ARC seeks to expand it’s cooperation in to new and innovative areas ,its imperative that the member states of IOR-ARC takes stock of their capacity and will assist to each other to strengthen the areas of common interest.

There are clearly three specific areas in which Sri Lanka considers it self uniquely placed to contribute to enhance cooperation within the IOR-ARC region. These are:

- Environment
- Ocean Sciences
- Intellectual Property Rights

The idea is for Sri Lanka to provide a centre of excellence in one of these fields, where activities such as academic and professional exchanges, facilitation of capacity building, research and analysis and technical cooperation would take place. The government of Sri Lanka hopes to be able to provide resources for such a centre.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka welcomes the proposed review of the IORAC Charter, which seeks to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial co-operation through a consensus based approach.

Mr. Chairman,

Sri Lanka's expertise in the field of construction has been recognized regionally and internationally with Sri Lankans handling a number of mega construction projects for international agencies. Sri Lanka therefore wishes to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> Construction Business Conclave Seminar on Business Opportunities in 2011.

Sri Lanka has been historically a seat of learning and imparting knowledge. In the field of education, Sri Lanka has been able to produce globally competitive academics and researchers across all disciplines. We have developed our own postgraduate institutes in disciplines such as engineering, agriculture, science, medicine, management, archaeology and Buddhist studies. Sri Lanka wishes to underline that the challenges and concerns of the globalization process that is taking place in the realm of education can only be addressed in a collective manner.

In this regard, Sri Lanka appreciates the offer of the Government of Malaysia to host “IOR-ARC Higher Education Conference” which will be held in Malaysia. Given the importance of the agenda of this meeting, Sri Lanka will ensure the highest possible and active participation.

Mr. Chairman,

With the growing significance of emerging markets in Asia, Middle East, and parts of Africa, IORAC can play a significant role in the future.

Mr. Chairman,

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the contribution of the Chair, the members and the IOR-ARC Secretariat in steering this session to a successful conclusion. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka’s fullest support and cooperation in the progress of IOR-ARC.

May Triple Gems Bless You.

Thank You.

## **MALAYSIA**

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE  
DATUK RICHARD RIOT ANAK JAEM  
DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS MALAYSIA  
DURING THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE  
10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF  
THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION  
FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC)  
SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN  
THURSDAY, 5 AUGUST 2010**

**Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen.**

As this is the first time that I am taking the floor, allow me to express my heartiest thanks and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of the Republic of Yemen for the excellent hospitality and organization of this meeting. I am happy indeed to have the opportunity to be here in this beautiful and historic city of Sana'a to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation.

2. I wish to congratulate the Republic of Yemen for its leadership of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) over the last two years. At the same time, I would like to express our full confidence and support to the Republic of India as the incoming Chairman of IOR-ARC for 2011 and 2012. Malaysia will endeavour to work close with India to further strengthen the Association. Let me also congratulate Australia on its appointment as the new Vice-Chair. Malaysia believes that both India and Australia will continue the good work of the Republic of Yemen and strive to inspire IOR-ARC to an even brighter future.

3. Allow me also to take the opportunity to thank our senior officials for the tremendous efforts that they have undertaken over the last year and the recommendations that they have put forward for our consideration today. The Ministerial Meeting is indeed an important avenue for us to take stock of what has transpired since our meeting in Sana'a in June 2009.

**Mr. Chairman,**

4. Like others, Malaysia would like to see IOR-ARC become a successful grouping as that achieved by other regional organizations. Nevertheless, Malaysia acknowledges the constraints that IOR-ARC faces in its implementation of its many proposed projects and programmes. As IOR-ARC has been in existence for some 14 years, such challenges provide impetus on the need to draw up a road map on the way forward.

5. At 14 years, IOR-ARC is akin to a teenager approaching early adulthood and much guidance is necessary in order that the teenager does not go astray. As such, a roadmap detailing the future direction of IOR-ARC encompassing among others, practical work programmes must be put in place as a blueprint to drive the Association forward.

6. On a practical note, Malaysia is cognizant of the vital role that must be played by the Working Group of the Heads of Diplomatic Missions (WGHM) based in Pretoria which had been tasked to undertake periodic review of the work programme and the progress of projects including the three flagship projects, namely the Fisheries Support Unit, Maritime Transport Council and Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer. It is, therefore, important that IOR-ARC member states keep their representatives in Pretoria updated in order that the Working Group could perform its role and functions effectively. Another immediate step that the IOR-ARC could take to drive the Association forward is to engage its Dialogue Partners in a more meaningful manner so as to allow the Association to work hand-in-hand with its dialogue partners to build a win-win situation in various fields. Dialogue partners, with their immense strength financially and in capacity building, could be enticed to assist member states in various training courses, projects as well as funding.

**Mr. Chairman,**

7. At our last gathering in June 2009, member states of IOR-ARC were unanimous in the desire to undertake a review of the charter. In this regard, I am pleased to note that our senior officials have discussed thoroughly, and considered many viewpoints and recommendations to make not only the Charter, but also the Rules of Procedures, Staffing Regulations and Financial Regulations in order that they be more in keeping with today's demands.

8. It is hoped that with the improved working situation, the Secretariat will be able to play a more effective role in the running of IOR-ARC's operations. Malaysia is supportive of the need for the Secretariat to be given the necessary tools and means and, more importantly, the relevant mandate to execute its responsibilities.

9. With regard to trade, I am pleased to note that Malaysia's trade with IOR-ARC member countries last year amounted to USD92.94 billion, a slight decrease over that in 2008 owing mainly to the global financial and economic crises. At the same time, we are confident that a regional mechanism would boost trade potential and foreign investment cross flows among IOR-ARC member states. This would be one of the effective ways to elevate the Association's stature to be at par with other prominent regional cooperation as a framework to deepen and enhanced economic cooperation for the mutual benefits of member states.

10. As regards the desire to elevate the international profile of IOR-ARC, Malaysia is of the view that the proposal for IOR-ARC to seek Observer status of the United Nations General Assembly and the United Nations Economic and Social Council is but one way forward for the Association to consider. We welcome, therefore, the Secretariat's initiative to conduct a preliminary study on the cost benefits of such an undertaking as well as the procedures to be followed for the granting of Observer Status to IOR-ARC, for member states' further consideration.

**Mr. Chairman,**

11. Allow me also to underline Malaysia's continued commitment to the various projects and programmes under the three Working Groups. In particular, I wish to highlight that our national university, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, will be hosting in March 2011 the IOR-ARC Higher Education Collaboration for Academic Excellence Convention which is aimed at exploring the potential of establishing an IOR-ARC Centre for Multilateral Education in Malaysia. Member states' active participation at the Convention would be vital as we deliberate the types and mechanisms of multilateral education that would be plausible, practical and beneficial in the IOR-ARC context and we look forward to meeting you in Kuala Lumpur.

12. With regard to the Republic of Yemen's timely initiative to combat piracy in the Gulf of Aden and Oman Sea, Malaysia would be happy to share its experience and best practices in managing security and curbing armed robbery and piracy in the Straits of Malacca.

13. Let me conclude, Mr. Chairman, by emphasizing Malaysia's confidence in the vast potential of this Association. Despite the many obstacles and global challenges confronting us. I believe that given time, this grouping of Indian Ocean Rim states will gain strength, and that IOR-ARC will be a success as had been envisaged by its Founders.

I thank you for your attention.

## **AUSTRALIA**

### **Australia's Statement to the Tenth Meeting of the IOR –ARC Council of Ministers**

**Sana'a, 5 August 2010**

**Delivered by Ms Deborah Stokes, First Assistant Secretary**

**South and West Asia and Middle East Division**

**Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

His Excellency, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, Ministers, Excellencies and distinguished delegates, Australia is pleased to participate in the Tenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers. I represent Australia's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade, Stephen Smith, who, due to the Federal Election being contested in Australia this month, is unable to attend. Mr Smith conveys his wishes for the success of this meeting.

The Indian Ocean region has assumed greater significance in recent years, globally and to Australia. In December 2007, in his first speech as Foreign Minister, Mr Smith said Australia needed to look west - that is to the Indian Ocean region. This recognises Australia's interests in the security, prosperity and sustainability of the Indian Ocean region. Australia has enhanced its engagement with its Indian Ocean rim neighbours, from the countries of South East Asia, the countries of South Asia, the countries of the Gulf and the countries of Africa.

Australia recognises the leading position IOR-ARC holds as the region's largest grouping and the importance of it functioning as an effective organisation, building closer cooperation between Member States.

Australia wishes to play its part in making a constructive contribution to IOR-ARC. This is why in response to the invitation for nominations, Australia has put itself forward to serve as Vice-Chair from 2011 when India will assume the Chair.

Australia notes that IOR-ARC's Committee of Senior Officials meeting in 2008 recommended that the Council of Ministers look favourably upon candidacies from Member States of South-East Asia and Oceania at the time of the next Vice-Chair vacancy. Were Australia to be endorsed by this meeting as Vice-Chair, we would look forward to supporting and working with the current Chair, Yemen, and the next Chair, India, and other members - as well as the Secretariat - to enhance and further the effectiveness of IOR-ARC activities.

Australia is pleased to endorse the conclusions of the Senior Officials' Meeting and welcomes the improvements to the Charter and Rules of Procedure. Australia wishes to welcome Oman's commitment to the Fisheries Support Unit, an important initiative for IOR-ARC. We also

welcome the decision of Senior Officials to recommend the Indian Ocean Research Group be granted observer status. In that connection we note that the Indian Ocean Group, together with the Indian Council for World Affairs, will convene a conference in New Delhi in April 2011 on the topic of 'Indian Ocean Regionalism: Revitalising IOR-ARC'. We welcome this initiative.

Senior Officials appreciated very much the briefing provided by Yemen on the piracy problem. Given the importance of this issue to most, if not all, member countries, we would see merit in having an exchange of views on piracy at the next Senior Officials' Meeting.

We also welcome the proposal that Senior Officials meet twice a year as this will help to maintain IOR-ARC's momentum throughout the year.

In conclusion, Australia wishes to convey to Yemen our appreciation for its excellent work as Chair of IOR-ARC and for its generous hospitality in hosting this meeting.

Thank you.

## **THAILAND**

**Statement by Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
Mr. Chavanond Intarakomalyasut  
At the Tenth Council of Ministers Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim  
Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC)  
5<sup>th</sup> August 2010  
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen**

---

Mr. Chairman,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

May I first begin by joining my colleagues in expressing my thanks and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the organization of this meeting and the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I would also like to express our appreciation for H.E. Dr. Abu Baker Al-Qirbi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, for chairing this meeting. I am confident that with Your Excellency's able guidance, our sessions today will be successful in achieving meaningful results that would propel the progress of the IOR-ARC.

Before I proceed, please allow me to convey the message from H.E. Mr. Kasit Piromya, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Thailand, who unfortunately is not able to attend this meeting due to a previous engagement. The Foreign Minister has entrusted me to lead the Thai Delegation on his behalf and wished this meeting every success.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

IOR-ARC is a unique regional forum, comprising 18 Member States from many parts of the world, namely Africa, the Middle East, South Asia, Southeast Asia and Australia. As such, IOR-ARC represents a region of great diversity, but this diversity should not be regarded as an obstacle. Rather, the diversity reflected in the IOR-ARC must be viewed as a key advantage that would help fulfil our association's huge but largely untapped potentials.

In this regard, Thailand sees the review of the IOR-ARC Charter as a positive step in the right direction towards revitalizing the IOR-ARC. But while we embark on this and other initiatives, we must realize that the future success of this Association calls for all Member States to remain fully committed to the fundamental principles of consensus, open regionalism and voluntary participation. As such, our new Charter must uphold these important principles and reflect our shared political will to enhance our cooperation in the IOR-ARC without creating legal obligations.

Indeed, there are vast opportunities for closer and more focused economic and technical cooperation within the IOR-ARC framework. Thailand is of the view that we were to reap the full

benefits of IOR-ARC, we must be more realistic and practical in our approach, focusing our efforts only in the key areas that truly reflect our common interests. Such a more focused and action-oriented approach is required if we were to make our cooperation more concrete and its benefits more tangible.

Such an area of common interest is maritime transport and security, which is essential for international trade and economic prosperity of all countries surrounding the Indian Ocean. Thailand supports the establishment of the Maritime Transport Council and its objectives of promoting maritime transport activities and addressing the challenges related to maritime pollution control and environmental protection. Thailand believes that the functions of the Maritime Transport Council should be in line with the work of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

With regards to maritime security, Thailand shares its concerns with the international community on the increase of piracy threats in international waters, particularly in the Gulf of Aden and Western Indian Ocean in recent years. As this problem is cross border in nature, efforts to curb piracy requires coordinated international cooperation. Governments of the IOR-ARC Member Countries have a crucial role to play, especially as port and coastal states surrounding the Indian Ocean. We should enhance cooperation, share information, and increase communication, particularly to alert others in the nearby areas when attempted attacks were reported. Moreover, the best practices and experiences from the success of ReCAAP could be shared with and extended to our efforts to combat piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Indian Ocean as well. ASEAN developments to strengthen maritime security could also serve as further examples of regional cooperation. To this end, we welcome the adoption of the Djibouti Code of Conduct last year as well as Yemen's initiative in combating piracy.

Another area of common interests that we could concentrate our effort in, is fisheries. To this end, the Fisheries Support Unit can be an effective mechanism supporting the exchange of know-how as well as promoting trade, research and management in the field of fisheries and aquaculture. Moreover, the FSU could also play a role in the conservation and better utilization of fisheries resources and the protection of the environment in the Indian Ocean.

In this regard, Thailand would be glad to offer our experiences and expertise, such as in the fields of fisheries and maritime transport and security, to other IOR-ARC Member States.

Furthermore, given the increasingly evident impacts of global warming on marine and coastal species and eco-system, the importance of climate change cannot be understated. Rising sea levels, extreme weather and food security problems caused by climate change are threatening local communities along the coasts and elsewhere in the world. Thus, Thailand believes that climate change should be regarded as a potential crucial area of cooperation in the IOR-ARC. We should explore the possibilities in fostering our cooperation in this area, through the exchange of information, the organization of capacity building programs as well as the development of renewable and low-carbon energy, in order to mitigate the effects of climate change.

Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,

As an active and responsible member of the international community, Thailand is committed to playing a constructive role in the IOR-ARC. Hence, on behalf of the Kingdom of Thailand, I would like to express our willingness to work with all Member States and Dialogue Partners in order to accomplish our common goals for the shared prosperity of our region.

Thank you.

**MOZAMBIQUE**

**REPÚBLICA DE MOÇANBIQUE  
MINITÉRIO DOS NEGÓCIOS ESTRANGEIROS E  
COOPERAÇÃO**

**Statement by**

**His Excellency Ambassador**

**Armando Panguene**

**Adviser to the**

**Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation for Political Affairs**

**At the**

**X Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC**

**Sana'a, 5<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

---

**Honourable Dr. Abubakar Abdulla Al-Qirbi,**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen,**  
**Chairman of the IX Meeting of the Council of Ministers**  
**Of the IOR-ARC**

**Excellencies,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is an honor for me to address the X Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation (IOR-ARC) on behalf of His Excellency Dr. Oldemiro Baloi, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Republic of Mozambique, who could not attend this August Assembly.

Allow me to express the gratitude of our delegation to the Government and to the People of the Republic of Yemen for convening this important meeting of the Council of Ministers of IOR-ARC and express our appreciation for the excellent hospitality afforded to us in this beautiful city of Sana'a and for the arrangements made for this meeting.

I would also like to congratulate You Mr. Chairman for the brilliant Chairmanship of our organization during your tenure.

Special recognition goes also to the Working Group of Heads of Missions in Pretoria, for the Senior Officials and to the Secretariat for the extraordinary preparatory work done and for the good quality of documents presented before us.

We would like to reiterate our availability to work closely with the Member States and the Secretariat for the continuing success of our organization.

**Excellencies**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

The process of reforming the IOR-ARC has come to a crucial stage with the drafting of a new Charter for our Organization. We find the present draft of enormous value. We deeply appreciate the work done by our experts. The new Charter will provide us with the necessary tools to effectively meet the goals and aspirations of our organization, particularly in funding our programmes.

It is our desire and expectation that in this new framework, our Governments, through the National Focal Points will play a significant role in the promotion of the IOR-ARC among our civil society. We also foresee a greater visibility in the international arena.

The *new* IOR-ARC should be directed to provide good services to our peoples and interact with the business communities in the promotion of economic growth and social progress in the Member States.

With this approach, we could save our scarce resources and invest them in priority areas with direct impact in the daily life of our population. Coordination and rationalization are the key factors for our success and credibility.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me to take this opportunity to briefly share with you some of the recent developments in the Republic of Mozambique.

As we informed at the 9<sup>th</sup> Council in October 2009, Mozambique held its 4<sup>th</sup> multiparty general elections, which were considered peaceful, fair and transparent by the international community.

Indeed, as a result of these elections, the National Assembly, the Cabinet and Provincial Assemblies are functioning in a stable environment.

The National Assembly has approved a Five Year Government Program and the Social and Economic Plan for the Year 2010 and its budget allowing therefore the Government to implement its program focused on the fight against poverty.

The Government of Mozambique has been focusing its initiatives in attracting foreign investment and the response has been so far positive. The main areas for foreign investment in the country are in the sectors of infra-structures, agriculture, energy, forestry, mining and tourism.

We therefore invite the Member States to either bilaterally or in the framework of our organization to invest in Mozambique taking advantage of the good business environment created by the Government.

**Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to express the support of the Government of Mozambique to the incoming Chair and Vice Chair and reiterate our commitment to work closely with India and Australia for the success of our Organization.

Let me conclude my remarks by reiterating the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique to continue to work closely with all member states and the dialogue partners for the successful materialization of our objectives.

I thank you.

**SULTANATE OF OMAN**

**TENTH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING  
OF  
INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR  
REGIONAL COOPERATION**

**AUGUST 5, 2010  
SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**

**STATEMENT DELIVERED BY**

**H.E TALIB BIN MIRAN AL-RAISI**

**HEAD OF ECONOMIC SECTOR  
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SULTANATE OF OMAN**

**Your Excellency, the Chair of Council of Ministers, Distinguish delegates, ladies and gentleman,**

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you for the assumption of the Chair of Council of Ministers meeting and hosting this meeting in this beautiful historical city of Sana'a. On behalf of the Omani delegation, I would like to thank your Excellency and the Yemeni government for the excellent arrangement and warm hospitality that accorded to our delegation since our arrival.

The excellent preparation made by your government will undoubtedly contribute towards the success of our meetings.

I would also like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks and appreciation to the Heads of IOR-ARC working groups, Academic group, Business Forum, Working group of Trade and Investment, Sub committee of Senior officials, working groups of Heads of Missions in South Africa and the Secretariat for all the hard work and dedication that brought us to this important event of Council Of Ministers.

The conclusion drawn in the last few days and the projects approved like the FSU, MTC, Tourism are all important decisions issues; we also welcome our dialogue partners and we hope they will come on board after consultation in liaison with the Secretariat and the Head of Mission group in South Africa.

**Distinguish delegates, ladies and gentleman,**

Recent changes in the international arena system demand that countries of IOR-ARC shall become close partners. Diversification of this organisation including the North and South countries creates many opportunities for all of us.

We need to strengthen this partnership to facilitate two way trade and investment flow. Such partnership should be based on shared commitment to market economy, open multilateral trading system, non discrimination liberalisation and open regionalism. We also submitted strategic vision paper to the Secretariat and we are happy to discuss it in the next strategic vision forum in Mauritius.

Finally, we would like to express our willingness in continuing to work with our next Chair India and Vice-Chair Australia, and with you all Member of States and dialogue partners to achieve our objectives and goals for the benefit and progress of our countries and people.

## **SOUTH AFRICA**

### **STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR S NGOMBANE AT THE GENERAL DEBATE DURING THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC), SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN, 5 AUGUST**

Honourable Chair  
Your Excellencies  
Executive Director  
Ladies and Gentlemen

We would like to extend a warm word of appreciation for the hospitality extended to my delegation during the 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. Also, please allow us on behalf of the South African delegation to congratulate our host, for the excellent organization of this event and the effective manner in which he has conducted the Chairmanship. We would also like to congratulate India on their assumption of the Chair of the Association and Australia as incoming Vice-Chair.

May I also express our gratitude to the Executive Director as well as the Secretariat, for the excellent support rendered to ensure the smooth functioning of the meetings preceding this 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the IOR-ARC.

Members of the IOR-ARC

The strategic importance of the Indian Ocean is increasingly recognized. The ocean surrounding us is vital to many in terms of trade. For India, the Middle East and Africa, China, the US, the European Union and others. For centuries, our countries, economies and peoples have been bound together in an informal cooperative economic community. Traders, seaman, fishermen, and pilgrims traveled across the Indian Ocean, building a vibrant trading network.

Currently, as observed by other colleagues, the Indian Ocean carries half of the world's container ships, one third of the bulk cargo traffic, and two-thirds of the world's oil shipments. Therefore, one of the clearest areas of mutual interest for Members of the IOR-ARC is maritime transport. We are therefore glad that today we shall launch the Maritime Transport Council, with the aim of facilitating cooperation across the Indian Ocean Rim and the promotion of inter-regional trade and investment.

On the borders of the Indian Ocean Rim lie a number of large and expanding markets, including India and South Africa, which are undergoing steady economic liberalization and growth. We trust that the evolving economic structures of Indian Ocean Rim countries will drive much of the future trade growth. We therefore need to create a conducive environment in which the goal of the IOR-ARC for regional cooperation becomes a reality. We need to use the IOR-ARC as a key to unlock the potential of the Indian Ocean Rim, in particular enhancing trade and investment flows, as well as the sustainable exploitation of the vast tourism potential of the Association's members.

For this reason, I am glad that the Review of the Charter and regulations will be completed at this meeting. Constructive contributions from all Member States have led to the reinvigoration of the IOR-ARC and practical measures to strengthen the Secretariat, In the coming years, we will have to keep up the momentum and ensure that project implementation is made more efficient, and that projects are increasingly targeted at agreed focal areas of cooperation addressing mutual interests and needs in the Indian Ocean region.

I would like to express my appreciation to the Working Group of Heads of Missions who are in charge of the overview of projects, met in Tshwane Pretoria earlier this year. The added value of having an oversight body to monitor project implementation is clear to us all. I would like to urge all member countries to participate, be actively involved and take ownership of the projects identified and discussed during this series of meetings.

South Africa remains committed to the strengthening of the institutional capacity of the IOR-ARC. In this regard, we have decided to extend the secondment of our official to the Secretariat in order to sustain the momentum generated in the implementation of the work programme of the IOR-ARC and to ensure continuity until the vacant Director's post is filled. In this regard, we would like to welcome India's efforts and encourage other member countries to show their commitment by actively assisting with the strengthening of the Secretariat and thereby having a positive impact on the operations of this Association.

Distinguished Members of the IOR-ARC

We hope this 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting will strengthen our resolve to unlock the enormous potential of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation for the benefit of our people. In addressing the security concerns in the Indian Ocean, South Africa is considering the request from the African Union to deploy naval units in the Indian Ocean to assist in combating Piracy and Trafficking.

In conclusion, Chairperson

South Africa looks forward to fruitful discussions together with our partners from the region. May our deliberations be focused and productive.

Thank you for your attention.

# MAURITIUS

## Statement by Mauritius at the 10<sup>th</sup> IOR-ARC Council, Sana'a Yemen 05 August 2010

Chairperson  
Hon Ministers  
Distinguished Representatives of Dialogue Partners  
Distinguished Delegates  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I have been requested by the Hon. Minister of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade of the Republic of Mauritius, Dr Hon Arvin Boolell, to present his apologies to you, Members of the Council, for not being able to be present at this 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers in Sana'a because of his urgent commitments.

Hon Boolell has kindly asked me to convey to you, Excellencies and Members of the Council, his best wishes for a successful meeting.

Like all the previous distinguished speakers, allow me to convey my profound gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Yemen for the warm welcome.

### **Excellencies,**

I am pleased to inform you that the Secretariat of the IOR-ARC would soon move to a new state-of-the-art accommodation the heart of a growing new city, Ebene, in Mauritius. We sincerely hope that our secretariat would be happy to work in the new conducive environment.

The Year 2009 has been fruitful for our organization. I would cite only one step that is the preparatory work for the review of the Charter. After 13 years of existence of our organization, we have taken a bold step to give a sense of direction to our organization with a Member-driven approach. The intention is to unleash the dynamic complementarities and potentialities in the new changing global environment and promote greater regional cooperation among Member States, encompassing the African, Gulf, Asian and Australasian regions.

In spite of the tyranny of distance and the disparity in the levels of development of our countries, we have been able so far to engage ourselves in some form of economic as well as cultural cooperation. The stage is set to intensify such cooperation.

With hindsight, we believe that the IOR-ARC provides a platform for us to access each other's markets and thus change the predominantly the North-South pattern of trade. The promotion of trade and investment through a general framework/umbrella agreement and support measures like improvement of air and maritime transport, organization of trade/investment promotion contacts on a region-wide basis, should be in the fore front of our agenda.

We also value relations with our Dialogue Partners, other countries and organizations which may, in particular contribute to intensified economic cooperation, capacity –building and overall development of our populations at large.

### **Excellencies,**

With these few words of optimism, I thank you for your kind attention

## **INDONESIA**

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador Nurul Aulia  
Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia  
on behalf of the Minister for Foreign Affairs

At the General Debate  
IOR-ARC Council of Ministers  
Sana'a, 5 August 2010

Your Excellency Dr. Abu Baker Al Qirbi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, and Chair of this Meeting,

Excellencies Ministers,  
Distinguished Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing the Indonesian delegation's gratitude to you, Chair, to the Government and the people of Yemen for the generous hospitality accorded to us and excellent organisation of this meeting.

I am confident that under your stewardship, our meeting will be fruitful and will strengthen our cooperation in the IOR-ARC.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

During its 13 years of existence, IOR-ARC has launched projects and programmes in various fields. These are still to be fully implemented.

Thus our Association is facing challenges. But its strategic value is beyond doubt and the benefits that it can bring to its members could be tremendous. For, this is a region endowed with immense human and natural resources.

Bearing in mind of its economic potential that the IOR-ARC can become a very dynamic region if we can achieve higher levels of economic cooperation and enlarge our cultural interaction.

Hence, the latest meeting of the Council of Ministers in Sana'a 2009, noted the recommendations of the Sub-Committee of Senior Officials that was tasked to review and propose amendments to the IOR-ARC Charter and its related documents.

Indonesia welcomes these recommendations aimed at revitalizing our Association. We agree with the proposal that we in the IOR-ARC take a sectoral approach to our cooperation. And that our cooperation in the maritime transport, fisheries, science and technology sectors be strengthened, as these are our common concerns as littoral states.

We are pleased that the recommendations took into account the principles of non-interference in domestic policy and respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty of the member states. We are reassured that the practice of decision making based on consensus be maintained in the revised charter. Thus we strike a balance between change and continuity in our cooperation.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

In regard of our cooperation in fisheries, sharing of best practices should be given the highest priority. As littoral states, we are also endowed with a wealth of marine and coastal resources. We should therefore not only tap the potential of these resources but also ensure their sustainability.

We welcome and support the initiative to establish a Maritime Transport Council to comprehensively improve management of maritime transportation in our region.

Over the Indian Ocean, moves the highest tonnage of goods in the world. Almost 100,000 ships, many of them carrying vital energy products, cross its expanse annually. This Council should therefore work towards improving our cooperation in maritime transport.

We share a common interest in the security and safety of the means of our sea transport. We welcome the initiative of the Republic of Yemen to combat piracy

in the Gulf of Aden, as well as the naval operations of a number of countries in the high seas off the Horn of Africa. We recognize relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, and emphasize the importance of respecting national sovereignty and territorial integrity of the member states, as well as international law, including in particular the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. We fervently hope that the conflicts in Somalia would be resolved soon and therefore remove a condition that has nurtured acts of piracy and armed robbery in the area.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

At the same time, we must consider that in today's world of rapid change, new challenges and opportunities are emerging. To deal with these realities, we must broaden our capabilities.

Hence, cooperation in the economic and political fields is no longer sufficient. It must be complemented by cooperation in the socio-cultural field to enhance our mutual understanding and boost our solidarity in facing challenges and seizing opportunities.

In reference to H.E Zainal Abidin Rashid, Senior Minister of State of Foreign Affairs of Singapore, for your information, we from Indonesia, just in the middle of last month, have materialized your idea where a number of artists and performers from Indonesia staged performances in Tarim, around 1.100 km east of Sana'a, and then perform in Seiyun. We proceeded to Mukalla the next day about 5 hours drive from Seiyun. Our last performances were 3 days in the capital of Yemen participating in Sana'a Summer Festival. We were delightful by the response and reception of the people from these towns and cities.

Mr. Chairman,

We must strengthen our people-to-people interaction. Exchanges between our respective students, journalists, academicians, artists and educational institutions will bolster relations among nations and communities in our region.

That is the basic idea behind the Developing Countries Partnership Scholarship (DCPS) and the *Darmasiswa* (non-degree) Scholarship programmes offered by Indonesia. Last year alone, 61 students from IOR-ARC members attended these programmes.

Moreover, we are now developing an Indian Ocean Study Centre at Andalas University in Padang, West Sumatra. We hope that this Centre will be able to dynamically engage with its counterparts in our region and boost our cooperation in the academic sector.

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

Indonesia welcomes the nomination of Australia as the next Vice-chair of IOR-ARC. We hope that India and Australia as the next leaders of our Association will build on the achievements of their predecessors in advancing our cooperation. Indonesia assures its full support and cooperation with the next chair and vice-chair.

Similarly, Indonesia endorses the nomination of Indian Ocean Research Group (IORG) to become IOR-ARC observer. Indonesia is looking forward to actively cooperate with the IORG in future relevant studies in the region.

Let us all work hard together to bring forward the important undertakings that we have begun. We must do all what we can to complete the implementation of our programmes and projects.

Thus we can effectively deal with the challenges and seize the opportunities of our time. And by our untiring continuous efforts, we can bring prosperity to our peoples and contribute to the making of a more secure, more stable and more prosperous Indian Ocean region.

I thank you.

## **BANGLADESH**

**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**

---

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.

-----

## **MADAGASCAR**

**Statement of the Ambassador of Republic of Madagascar to Libya,  
H.E. RAZAFINDRANDRIATSIMANIRY MICHEL, IOR-ARC Tenth  
Council of Ministers Meeting, Sana' a, Republic of Yemen,  
31July - 05August 2010**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, we would like to send our thanks to the Government of Republic of Yemen for the warm hospitality during the tenth council of Ministers meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim-ARC.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Madagascar could not be here to assist this great event because of his obligatory in our country.

Actually, Madagascar is on the way to end up the political problems.

Our presence here shows that Madagascar is ready to enhance the cooperation with the member states of IOR-ARC.

Kindly, we would like to thank the entire member states for their understanding and agreement, especially to give overtime for our country to complete and finalize those projects in the future.

Finally, Madagascar is always ready to follow and to participate the IOR-ARC activities and we wish the best with successfully for our Associations.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman, Thank you for your kind attention!

## **KENYA**

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

## **TANZANIA**

**STATEMENT BY MS. GRACE MUJUMA, ACTING HEAD OF DELEGATION OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, TO THE 10<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC), SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN, 5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2010**

**HONOURABLE DR ABO BAKER ABDULLAH AL-QUIRBI, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF YEMEN AND CHAIRPERSON OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

**HONOURABLE MINISTERS**

**EXCELLENCIES**

**DISTINGUISHED DIALOGUE PARTNERS AND OBSERVER**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN**

Let me begin by expressing my delegation's profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to the people and Government of the Republic of Yemen for the generous hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful and historical city of Sana'a as well as the excellent preparation for the meeting.

Allow me also to congratulate you for your good leadership in steering our Association since you assumed office and for the progress Report. My delegation wishes to assure you of our continued support and cooperation.

Also let me express our recognition at the tremendous efforts demonstrated by the Executive Director and the Secretariat in executing and coordinating the various activities of the Association.

**Mr Chairperson**

Over the 13 years of the existence, the Association has seen an increase in both its agreed projects and programmes as well as an increasing initiatives of cooperation in various fields. It is encouraging to note that to-date our Association has attained different stages of implementation of its programmes and projects and due to some unforeseen reasons some proposals being removed from our Agenda. However despite the challenges, I am confident that the principles and objectives that we committed ourselves thirteen years ago continue to be valid. We do hope that given the necessary political will shown by Member States, we will be able to adjust to a new level by giving a greater impetus to our Association.

### **Mr Chairperson**

The impact of the global financial crisis, environmental crisis, increased poverty , increased piracy activities in our region, just to mention a few, are a reminder to our Association to redouble its efforts in addressing various challenges we are facing.

It is in this regard, we are urgently required to start tackling the key issues that will ultimately enable us to strengthen our cooperation and be able to promote the well being of our people. Among the key issues which require attention so as to bring the expected integration and accelerated growth of the Association is the strengthening of the Charter.

### **Mr Chairperson**

In this context we do agree that the issue of reviewing the Association Charter so that it addresses all the concerns and priorities while maintaining the principle of consensus among member states as well as the principles that set up the Organisation when it began, is of paramount importance. It is our expectation therefore that the revised Charter will make the Secretariat efficient and effective to run our organisation in light of the increasing activities of the Working Groups and the Association at large and be able to meet the expectations of the Member States.

Let me assure you Mr Chairperson, Tanzania continues to be committed to the ideals of this Association despite the different levels of our development. We do recognize the great efforts taken to set priorities in our activities and to choose those that are beneficial to all of us though we are still facing great challenges in their implementation. We do agree we need to inject greater efforts to convince our respective capitals in this regard. Let this be our major task when we return back to our countries.

### **Mr Chairperson**

In conclusion may I once again recognize the contribution of the Chair and his team and the entire Secretariat of the Association for their good work and untiring efforts in organizing this tenth session of the Council and reiterate my delegations cooperation during this session. May I also take this opportunity to welcome India and Australia to steer the activities of our Association in 2011. Let me remind the Member Countries that “For a great vision to be achieved team work spirit is vital”.

I thank you.

## **STATEMENTS BY THE DIALOGUE PARTNERS STATES**

### **CHINA**

**Address at the Tenth Conference of the Council of Ministers of the  
Indian Ocean Rim – Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC)  
H.E. Ambassador Shu Zhan  
Sana'a , 5 August 2010**

**Your Excellency Foreign Minister Abu Bakar Al -Quirbi  
Your Excellency Secretary General Morteza Sarmadi  
Your Excellencies Heads of Delegation,  
Ladies and Gentleman**

It is a great pleasure for me to attend the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Council of Ministers of IORARC on behalf of Mr. Yang Jiechi, the Foreign Minister of China. First, I'd like to offer my congratulation on the convocation of the Conference and to express appreciation to the Government of Yemen and the Secretariat for the effective work they have done and the thoughtful arrangement they have made for all the attendants.

The Indian Ocean Rim Region , with abundant resources, vast market and convenient transportation, offering exordinary condition and great potential for cooperation of mutual benefit. Since its establishment in 1997, as the only economic Association of the region, IOR-ARC has played an active role in promoting regional economic cooperation and its members' common development. In recent years, the Association has worked hard, through strengthening its own capacity, to explore new fields and approaches to expand economic and trade cooperation of mutual benefit. Such efforts have brought notable results. Form the presentations delivered by the Chairperson of the COM and the Executive Director of the Association , we are glad to see that great achievements have been made in enhancing cooperation among the members in various fields and institution building. We are convinced that with further cooperation, the Association will accomplish even greater achievements, make more contribution to world economy growth and benefit its members and their peoples.

The world is recovering slowly from the international financial crisis. Nevertheless, the deep impact of the crisis still persists and many uncertain ties hinder full recovery of world economy. Against the background of accelerating economic globalization and regional economic integration, we should make full use of IOR-ARC as an effective platform to enhance dialogue and communication, coordinate economic cooperation and trade stimulus policies and deepen regional economic cooperation. The Association should encourage and urge Member States to fight against protectism in all forms in the Indian Ocean Rim Region, so as to make more contribution regional economic growth and full recovery of world economy, facilitate trade and investment and build a more open and freer trade system.

This conference will discuss the Amendment of the Charter, decision making rules, financial arrangements and issues concerning political and economic cooperation among member States. We believe, the conference will help further enhance the institution building of the Association and promote friendly cooperation among its member states.

Ladies and Gentleman

Since January 2000, when China became a dialogue partner of IOR-ARC, it has maintained friendly exchanges and close cooperation with the Association. We have sent delegation to attend each Ministerial conference of IOR-ARC and taken part in the discussion with its member states on ways and means to advance cooperation in the region. The economic and trade cooperation between China and IOR-ARC member in recent years has been fruitful. In 2008, trade between China and IOR-ARC members total 390.6 billion USDs, 26.9% higher than the previous year. Although the trade between China and IOR-ARC members declined a little in 2009 as a result of international financial crisis, the proportion in China's total foreign trade is rising year by year, which stood at 14.2% , 15.2% and 15.7% from year of 2007 to 2009. Meanwhile China has established or is negotiating on free trade areas with 8 of the IOR-ARC members, and has started the negotiation with SACU (including South Africa) on setting up the free trade area. Economic and trade between the two sides promises a vast prospect and massive potential in the long run.

China respects the purposes of IOR-ARC, has a stake in the Association's development , supports the work direction and cooperation priorities determined by the Association and hopes to see the Association play a greater function in boosting regional cooperation. We would like to work with the all Member Member States to enhance cooperation in the Indian Ocean Rim Region.

I wish to take this opportunity to announce, on the behalf of the Chinese Government, the contribution of 100,000USDs in cash to the Secretariat of the Association. It's not a lot of money, but it embodies our sincere aspiration to enhance cooperation with IOR-ARC. We hope this will be useful to the institution building of the Association and relevant cooperation projects.

**In conclusion, I wish the 10<sup>th</sup> COM of IOR-ARC a crowning success!**

# **EGYPT**

**Statement of H.E Ambassador Mohammed Morsy Awad  
Head of the Egyptian delegation**

**Before the  
10<sup>th</sup> ministerial meeting of the  
Indian Ocean Rim Association for  
Regional Cooperation**

**(IOR-ARC)**

**Sana'a , Republic of Yemen  
August 5<sup>th</sup> 2010**

**Please check against delivery**

**Mr. Chairman**

**Distinguished Delegates, ladies and gentlemen:**

Allow me at the outset, to thank our hosts, the Government and the people of the Republic of Yemen for their warm hospitality. I would also like to congratulate the chairmanship of this conference for the excellent arrangements made for its success.

**I would also like to extend on behalf of H.E minister Ahmed Aboul-Gheit Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt his greetings to all distinguished delegates and sincerest wishes of success for this conference.**

**Mr. Chairman**

**Excellencies,**

I am honored and privileged to participate in today's debate of the 10<sup>th</sup> ministerial meeting of the IOR-ARC , which is considered to be an important international association for Egypt as a Dialogue partner.

It is evident that today, more that ever, the IOR-ARC has acquired more impetus as it moves towards a new stage of greater opportunities enabling the association to tackle challenges that face the regional cooperation within the Indian Ocean as a lifeline of international trade and economy.

Egypt as a Dialogue Partner to the IORARC, is committed to the valued objectives of the association, and to the active participation in all its activities and meetings including the newly approved projects , with a view towards ensuring that the IOR-ARC exploits the immense opportunities to the fullest.

Our active participation, along with the valuable participation of other dialogue partners, emphasize the importance of collaboration and cooperation between countries of the Indian Ocean Rim and those of the Red and Mediterranean seas, sharing similar concerns and interests including maritime security, international trade and economy, as well as promoting regional and sub regional cooperation.

**Mr. Chairman**

**Excellencies,**

Finally, as we welcome the fruitful results of this meeting, we leave it with a greater sense of the important of the IOR-ARC. Once again Egypt reiterates its commitment to render necessary support and cooperation towards achieving the goals enshrined in the Charter of the IOR-ARC.

Thank you.

## **FRANCE**

### **INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL CO-OPERATION**

**Tenth Meeting of the Council of Ministers meeting (COM)  
Sana'a Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

*Speech of the M.Pascal Burel, Charge d'Affaires a.i.*

Excellencies,

France is very pleased to attend the tenth Meeting of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers. We would like to thank the Yemeni Presidency for welcoming and organizing this conference.

As a dialogue partner, with maritime borders in the Indian Ocean, France is very committed to the development of the IOR organization. Nearly one million French citizens live in this area. Coming from France as well as Indian Ocean countries, they are part of this great cultural community and deeply contribute to the diversity of the French culture and identity.

French developed a wide range of universities and research centres in the Indian Ocean - particularly in vulcanology and meteorology .Its navy and its air presence contribute to international efforts to improve the security in the region and to cope with natural disasters such as the Hubert hurricane.

France wishes to be a key partner in the IOR-ARC projects and hence promote the dynamism of the organization. France is aware of the importance of an organization gathering three continents. The IOR-ARC is the only body able to manage the region natural resources. We need to build up a common policy and carry our scientific cooperation to deal with the regional climate stakes, to manage the oceanic resources and develop ocean based energy technologies.

As part of the European Union, La Réunion can be a valuable partner in developing cooperation projects with the European Commission. French territories in the Indian Ocean are an important have already developed profitable economic partnerships in the area.

This is why, as announced last to this assembly, France is considering applying for an enhanced membership. Since then, we have been carrying out bilateral meetings with the IOR-ARC member States in order to officially submit this application to you.

I very warmly thank the Yemeni Presidency for the occasion I was given to address this assembly.

**Thank you very much.**