

**STATEMENT BY HON. RICHARD ONYONKA, ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA.ON THE OCCASION
OF THE 9th MEETING OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR
REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC), 25th JUNE 2009, SANA'A,
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN.**

**Your Excellencies, Fellow Ministers,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. First I would like to congratulate the outgoing chairman **H.E.Dr. Mottaki** the Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran for his successful stewardship of the IOR-ARC over the last three years. Additionally, I would like to congratulate **H.E. Dr. Abu Bakr Al Qurbi**, the Foreign Minister of Yemen on his assumption to the Chairmanship.

2. On behalf of the people of the Republic of Kenya, I would like to convey our appreciation to the Government of the Republic of Yemen for hosting this important meeting. It has been a great privilege to experience the warm hospitality and generosity of the people of Yemen towards our delegation.

3. I also wish to take this opportunity to thank all the distinguished delegations of the IOR-ARC member countries who have displayed their commitment to this association by gathering here over the past one week to discuss various cooperation initiatives and the way forward for this very important organization.

Mr. Chair,

4. In Kenya, we attach great significance to global partnerships. As a founding member of this association, Kenya remains fully committed to the objectives set out in the IOR-ARC charter. We look forward to seeing visible progress being made in the commissioning of joint projects and undertaking of various mutually beneficial technical cooperation initiatives between partner states. It is our sincere belief that there is still room for further progress and opportunities to harness our great potentialities.

Mr. Chair,

5. We appreciate the great efforts taken by member countries during the meetings of the IOR Business Forum and the Working Group on Trade and Investment to work towards the achievement of these goals. Indeed, taking into account the global economic situation that we currently face, Kenya presented to the Business Forum a concept paper on Regional Micro-Finance Capacity Building for consideration.

We believe that efficient and effective regulation and supervision of financial institutions within the region will bring about the necessary confidence and stability that is crucial for improved trade and investment.

Mr. Chair,

6. Tourism has over the years become a major driving force of our economies. This region is blessed with the world's most unique fauna and flora and a rich heritage that has been preserved over thousands of years. It is in this regard that Kenya presented a concept paper on Cooperation on Tourism for consideration by members of IOR-ARC. With the assistance of the Secretariat, we hope to receive positive responses and additional views of member states on the recommendations made.

Mr. Chair,

7. On the issue of Piracy, Kenya would like to reiterate the call made by our host country Yemen for a regional initiative towards combating the growing menace of Piracy along the waters of the Gulf of Aden. This phenomenon has had negative implications on trade and other economic activities. Consequently, Kenya together with other international partners has been involved in various initiatives aimed at eradicating this menace. Kenya therefore, calls upon the IOR-ARC member states to pledge their support for the establishment of a Regional Maritime Center in Sana'a.

Additionally, Kenya has expressed support for the UN Security Council Resolution No. 1816 of 2008, which calls for nations to work together and use all means necessary to contain the problem of piracy in the Indian Ocean.

Mr. Chair,

8. The situation in Somalia should be of great concern to all of us. The solution to the problem of Piracy cannot therefore be tackled in disregard to this situation. Kenya believes that there is need for the international community, and indeed the IOR-ARC member states, to spearhead diplomatic efforts geared towards resolving the Somali crisis and to stabilize the volatile situation on the Somali mainland.

We take this opportunity to recognize the practical steps being undertaken by Australia, India and The Islamic Republic of Iran in patrolling the waters of the Indian Ocean.

Finally, Mr. Chair,

9. On behalf of my delegation, I would also like to join hands with other delegations in conveying our condolences to the Government of Sri Lanka and the family of Amb. Marleen for his untimely death.

Thank you very much.