

IOR/9COM/REP/09/06

INDIA

**STATEMENT BY
MINISTER OF STATE FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS, DR SHASHI
THAROOR AT THE PLENARY
MEETING OF THE NINTH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE
INDIAN OCEAN RIM-ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL
COOPERATION (IOR-ARC) SANA'A, YEMEN 25 JUNE 2009**

Mr. Chairman

Honorable Ministers,

Distinguished Delegates, Excellencies and Friends:

At the outset, I would like to thank our hosts, the Government and the People of the Republic of Yemen for the warm hospitality extended to me and the members of my delegation. I would also like to compliment them for the excellent arrangements made for the Conference. It is also my pleasant duty to accept the Vice-Chairmanship of this body on behalf of India. Allow me, Mr. Chairman, to congratulate you Sir, for your contributions as Vice-Chairman till today, and on your assumption of the Chairmanship. I pledge that the Indian delegation and I personally will work under your strong leadership to bring momentum to our Association in the years ahead.

2. Mr. Chairman, allow me to congratulate and thank our colleagues for the tremendous efforts they have made over the last couple of days and the recommendations put forward for our consideration of the substantive agenda items. They have also done a comprehensive review of the status of our cooperation.

3. These meetings have always provided delegations with the opportunity to meet and learn more about each other, about differences as well as our commonalities and are thus important to focus on making faster progress and to give new directions to our cooperation. It helps us to keep track of the vision of the Association and allows us to introspect on whether we are taking steps, however small they may be, towards achieving the goals enshrined in the Charter.

4. I congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran, the outgoing Chair, and in particular the dynamic Foreign Minister, for the considerable efforts made in making the Association more dynamic and taking it forward under Iran's Chairmanship. The Secretariat has been assiduous and energetic in supporting and implementing the Ministerial decisions. The coordination done by Working Group Meetings of our Heads of Mission in Pretoria has been valuable as it has provided a useful forum for pursuing IOR-ARC matters.

5. I have closely gone through the agenda and I am pleased to see that some of the studies under taken are now acquiring shape as concrete projects. These will certainly serve as building blocks for a solid structure of cooperation in our littoral region. It makes me happy to see that the seeds are being sown for transforming the Association from a declaratory phase to an action oriented phase with Member Countries embarking on cooperative projects. At the same time, Excellencies, we are aware that a great deal more needs to be done to make the Association realize its true potential. The destinies of our countries are linked in more than one way. Being littoral states of the Indian Ocean is just one of the many threads that bind us. How we are able to weave the threads into a rich tapestry of cooperation is the challenge facing all of us here today. We have some ideas. Our senior officials have offered some suggestions. My own feeling is that the Association has now reached a level of maturity where we need to initiate and implement creative, indeed bold, initiatives. I look forward to discussing some of them today with my esteemed colleagues, and to hearing some of your own ideas. And I thank the distinguished delegation of Singapore for starting the ball rolling just now.

6. One serious proposal to intensify work of the Association is related to the strengthening of the IOR-ARC Secretariat and other associated mechanisms. I agree that the matter needs close examination as only a strong Secretariat can service the ever-increasing demands that we propose to put on it in the near future by our increasing cooperation. It is time for us to review the Charter to meet the needs of an enhanced agenda and growing cooperation. I understand that some views have already been exchanged in this regard by our senior officials. We will discuss this in detail in our deliberations.

7. I am aware that some priority issues related to the working of the Association have been discussed by the Senior Officials. Excellencies, India feels that the time is now ripe that priority areas emerging from the deliberations of the Academic Group, Business Forum and Working Group on Trade and Investment are identified and prioritized. It is our view that sectoral working groups, with members from nodal or line Ministries, should meet at regular intervals with their counterparts. They should draw up Action Plans in priority areas of cooperation and implement them in a time bound-manner.

8. This is particularly required now when the Association is heading towards a project-oriented phase. Such interaction would also generate new ideas and provide the "headquarters" support that is so essential for projects to be meaningfully implemented.

9. There has been a proposal from the Secretariat to set up National Chapters under various forums, i.e. Academic, Business and Trade and Investment. India has already identified its nodal Ministry/ agencies dealing with these Working Groups and would like to continue this practice.

10. I shall, at this stage, not endeavour to go into the details of the issues that will come up for deliberation during the meeting. I am sure we shall have scope for substantive discussions later. Nevertheless, I take this opportunity to mention some initiatives that India proposes to take in the coming months.

11. India invites IOR-ARC Member Countries to participate substantively in the prestigious India International Trade Fair (IITF) held annually in New Delhi, from November 14-27. As you

are aware, India has in the past provided free space to some fellow Member States and we are delighted to renew our offer to those Member States. We also propose to organize a sectoral seminar or a Buyer-Seller Meet on the sidelines of the Trade Fair.

12. An "Annapurna" World of Food India is being organized by the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) on 25-26 November 2009 at Mumbai. This is India's largest business-to-business meeting platform for food and beverage industry. We invite all IOR-ARC Members to participate.

13. I am glad to announce the allocation of 34 scholarships from the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) for postgraduate studies in India. This will be towards implementation of our offer made last year under the General Agreement agreed to by the University Mobility in the Indian Ocean Region (UMIOR) group and the Academic Group.

14. In our efforts towards strengthening of training, in high-level professional development programmes towards capacity building, I would like to inform you that under the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation (ITEC) Programme, we have around 200 courses in 43 institutions during 2009-2010. I would invite Member Countries to nominate participants for these courses. As regards the specialized courses offered by us last year, the course relating to "Disaster Risk Management including coastal and marine hazards" is proposed to be held at the Integrated Coastal and Marine Area Management Project Directorate (ICMAM PD), Chennai in late October/early November this year. The specific dates will be circulated shortly.

15. A Specialized Training Course for Foreign Diplomats of the IOR-ARC member countries is being organized by the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs from 5-16 October 2009. I would urge interested Member Countries to participate in this specialized course as well.

16. Keeping in view the interest shown and the participation by Member Countries in making the First IOR-ARC Film Festival held in India in February 2008 a great success, I am delighted to announce that we propose to hold the Second Film Festival in India in August 2010.

17. At the 3rd Meeting of the IOR-ARC Council of Ministers in Muscat, it was decided to continue with the "Chair" of Indian Ocean Rim studies. India and Mauritius, had invited applications for the post. The Selection Committee had in December 2007 selected a suitable person, who however was not offered the position within a time frame that he found acceptable. In view of this, the vacancy has to be circulated again for the selection of another candidate. I propose the formation of a Selection Committee for this purpose. I further propose to Mauritius that to attract the best talent, we suitably revise the emoluments associated with the "Chair".

18. As regards the secondment of a new Director from India to the Secretariat, we regret that there have been some difficulties in the past, but we are now confident of seconding an officer in near future.

19. With regards to the proposal to establish an Open University of Mauritius, I am happy to inform you that the Indira Gandhi National Open University in Delhi would be able to provide suitable support in setting up the Open University in Mauritius.

20. There are three new proposals from India on (i) Agro-Meteorological Advisory Service System for Enhancing Agriculture Output, (ii) Potential Fishing Zone Advisories and (iii) Forecast Demonstration Project for Improving the Track, Intensity, Landfall Prediction and Impact Assessment of Tropical Cyclones affecting the North Indian Ocean Rim Countries, under the Academic Group. We seek the support and cooperation of Member Countries in converting these proposals into tangible projects.

21. I am happy to announce that India offers to lead in the new area for Promoting Cultural Cooperation among IOR-ARC Member Countries and our Indian Council of Cultural Relations (ICCR) would be the Coordinator. We look forward to the support and cooperation of Member Countries in this area,

22. Excellencies, I have listed a few of the initiatives that my country will be taking up in the coming months. At the same time I am acutely aware that much more needs to be done by each Member Country so that the Association can acquire a presence in the collective consciousness of our peoples. After all that is what brings us here together. I will be candid here and say that I had to explain to a lot of people what this association is all about, when I announced that my first trip abroad after becoming a Minister would be to attend this Conference. I am confident that we will be able to give a concrete shape and direction to the grouping in such a way that in coming years this Association starts to touch the lives of people living on the shores of the mighty Indian Ocean. Let this meeting be a milestone in the organization's progress in which we make a solemn resolution to fast-track our cooperation.

23. I personally have a great deal of faith in the potential of this organization. I am delighted to see that this organization brings together so many diverse countries at different stages of development coming together tied by a single and unique bond - the neighbourhood of an Ocean. This diversity of interests and capabilities may have so far impeded substantive cooperation, but in this diversity I see the kernels of fruitful cooperation as it opens up immense possibilities of doing whatever suits a group of countries to undertake. Our senior officials have already touched upon two possible new areas of work- tourism and the combat against piracy. I hope we can take these issues back to our capitals to reflect on the substantive content we can give to them. This is undoubtedly a challenge and an opportunity. Let us rise to it so that this Association is seen as a model platform for transcontinental cooperation. We have taken due note of the idea mentioned at the working breakfast to consider making the UN General Assembly session as a deadline for advancing our thoughts on such matters, and we will take this on board as a possible way forward.

24. Mr. Chairman, we look forward to working under your leadership and the leadership of Yemen as Chair of the Association during the next couple of years. Having assumed the onerous responsibility of Vice Chair this year, I would like to convey my assurances to the Chair and all Member Countries that India will do its utmost in the coming years to help energize our organization and to ensure that this Association which unusually brings together countries of Asia, Africa and Oceania realizes in considerable measure its vision of meaningful cooperation transcending international boundaries.

Thank you.

SINGAPORE

STATEMENT BY SENIOR MINISTER OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS ZAINUL ABIDIN RASHEED AT INDIAN OCEAN RIM-ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION 9th COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING, 25 JUNE 2009

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

First, I would like to begin by thanking Yemen as the Chair for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality that you have extended to all of us since our arrival. For most of my delegation, this is our first visit to Yemen and the warmth and generosity of spirit that we have experienced has made all of us want to return to see more of the wonderful city of Sana'a and the other rich historical sites and culture of Yemen.

We meet here today in interesting times. It has been twelve years since the Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation was first officially launched in Mauritius in March 1997. Singapore is privileged to have been involved in the IOR-ARC since its inception, with the links that it draws to our historical roots as a trading nation with a long history of economic and trade linkages with the Indian Ocean Rim countries.

The potential afforded by the IOR-ARC cannot be overstated. The diversity of membership among the Indian Ocean littoral states offers vast opportunities for greater economic cooperation, tourism, trade and investment. That said, the sheer geographical spread and diversity of member states also mean that co-operation can only proceed at a pace that is comfortable and compatible with the various interests of individual members states. After all, twelve years is not a long time to build up mutual confidence and understanding, or to put in place the mechanisms to advance the economic goals and interaction that we set out for ourselves. In order for the Association to be bigger than the sum of our parts, we need to continue to forge and identify what our commonality of interests are, and have the discipline to focus on what these are in order to move things forward. Thus far, the formation of the IOR-ARC Academic Group, the Business Forum and the Trade and Investment Working Group are steps in the right direction. At the same time, we need to guard against over institutionalizing the platforms. We need to continually review the mechanisms, resist the temptation to proliferate issues, and if necessary, re-set the agenda in order to encourage even greater interaction and co-operation. The more focused we can be, the more progress we can forge and in this respect, the funds and support from the various member states will naturally come.

As a small country, Singapore is committed to playing a constructive and meaningful role in the IOR-ARC. In this regard, we would like to invite member states to take advantage of and participate in our Singapore Cooperation Programme, where we provide technical assistance in a wide range of areas from information technology, to tourism, port management and urban development, to public administration, law and governance. To date, Singapore has hosted some 12, 900 SCP participants from the various IOR-ARC states. At the same time, to meet the

increasing demand for technical assistance and collaboration, we have set up the Singapore Cooperation Enterprise to provide customized solutions built around our developmental expertise and offered on a cost-recovery basis for countries that would like to avail themselves of this alternative route. We are happy to work with member states to see how both of these programs could be extended to member states as part of our commitment to the IOR-ARC.

UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Minister of State of Foreign Affairs the United Arabia Emirates

Mr. President (or your Excellency),

Please allow me to extend my congratulations on your assumption of the Presidency of the 9th conference of Foreign Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim-Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-IRC). I am confident that your wisdom and experience, and with the support and coordination of the member states, the 9th conference will successfully accomplish all its work. At the same time, I would like to express my appreciation and thanks for the warm reception and hospitality that have been extended to us since our arrival here in this historic and beautiful city.

The United Arab Emirates has been working, since joining this Association. To bolster economic and investment relations between the member states. It also worked to reinforce the role of this Association with other international organizations.

We feel that regular meetings and action plans of specific projects are essential in the current phase of the assoc.

Recently, and as many of you are aware, the world has witnessed unfavorable conditions at the international economic stage. Yet despite such a global economic slowdown, the United Arab Emirates believes, and in accordance with the mandate of this Association, that it is imperative to focus on liberating trade and dismantling trade and investment barriers in order to achieve balanced economic integration and enhance competence and competitiveness in the region.

The United Arab Emirates also believes that the growing threat of piracy needs a coordinated effort to preserve valuable human lives, protect the business interests of all

countries, including those of the IOR-ARC members, maintain the region's competitive edge and guarantee the security of our shipping lines. Maritime security is an important consideration given that the Indian Ocean is home to several chokepoints like the Straits of Hormuz, Straits of Malacca, the Lombok and the Sunda Straits, which could disrupt energy flows and trade.

Moreover, growing naval commerce mean "soft" security issues such as terrorism, smuggling of narcotics, illegal arms trade and environment degradation are also assuming importance. More urgently, the UAE sees a dire need for effective measures to tackle issues of illegal immigration such as human trafficking. A starting point to deal with such security issues is to coordinate efforts of the multi-dimensional IOR-ARC with that of maritime security-specific Indian Ocean Naval Symposium that was initiated last year.

The UAE is glad to offer its expertise and resources in addressing any of the issues that are of concern to the Association and its member states. Similarly, we are also looking forward to benefit from the expertise of other members. In the coming future, we sincerely hope to see our joint effort support a more robust and effective association.

As many of you are aware, over the past few months the UAE has been running an active diplomatic campaign to host the HQ of IRENA in Abu Dhabi. It is time, we believe, and I know many of you here will agree, that an international agency comes to our part of the world. This will send a strong signal to the international community that this agency is serious about tackling major issues such as climate change, sustainable development and access to Renewable Energy technology for all nations both developed and developing.

The UAE serves as a bridge between the developed and developing world - and is an ideal connecting point for all countries across the globe both logistically and in terms of the

multi-cultural nature of our society. With over 202 nationalities residing in the UAE, it truly is a home for an international agency. We believe that locating IRENA in the developing world will ensure that renewable energy will become at the forefront of the agenda of developing countries.

I conclude with our thanks and gratitude to the outgoing chair Dr. Mottaki for his stewardship, and thank Yemen for holding this gathering. We are confident that their role will be constructive and represent a significant addition to the work of the association.

SULTANATE OF OMAN

**IOR-ARC Ninth Council of Ministers Meeting, Sana'a, Republic of Yemen,
June 20th - 25th 2009**

**Statement by H.E. Sayyid Badr bin Hamad Albusaidi, Secretary General, Oman
Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

**Excellencies, distinguished colleagues. Ladies and
Gentlemen,**

May I first begin by expressing our gratitude to His Excellency Dr Ali mujawar, the Prime Minister of Yemen, for honouring us by his presence and his kind and valuable address this morning.

May I also congratulate our brother. His Excellency Dr. Abu Bakr Al Qurbi, The Foreign Minister of Yemen, for the assumption of the Chair of the Council of Ministers Meeting. I hereby wish to register our sincere gratitude to the Government of The Republic of Yemen for the excellent arrangements and the warm hospitality that has been accorded to our delegation since our arrival in Sana'a.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Islamic Republic of Iran, in particular our brother His Excellency, Dr. Manoucher Mottaki, the Foreign Minister, for all their efforts, support and achievements during their chairmanship of the Association over the last two years.

Excellencies and distinguished colleagues,

Since 1997 this Association has grown and expanded. Today we have 18 fully-fledged Member States from various continents, cultures and communities.

It is our wish to see the Association benefit as fully as possible from the unique opportunities it provides in uniting our diverse countries in common interests and partnership.

We would like to recognize the immense amounts of work devoted to strengthening the ever growing partnership among our countries. We are glad to observe that an increase in membership has been accompanied by an increase in activity, as well.

I would like here to register our appreciation to all of our Senior Officials, Members of the Working Groups and the Secretariat, for the hard work they have done in the interest and the development of our Association. It is therefore our hope that we can adopt the kind of mechanisms suggested for better bureaucratic and administrative efficiency, in particular in planning and implementing projects.

It is our belief that the introduction of better mechanisms would only enhance the work of our Association, encouraging further development and collaboration on issues of common benefit. I believe the Australian paper offers constructive recommendations in this regard and we welcome that.

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,

Participation, consultation and tolerance are fundamental values in Omani society, and we therefore warmly welcome the insights of all stakeholders in the decision making process. We acknowledge the importance of engaging diverse ranges of knowledge and experiences.

As one of our primary goals hinges upon the transfer of knowledge, education, and expertise among us, we acknowledge the benefits of broadening participation in these discussions, with a spirit of flexibility and accommodation.

We encourage participation to an extent that meets both objectives, enabling transfer of expertise whilst maintaining an environment intimate enough to allow for technical discussion.

The plethora of project development and investment opportunities, with which the Association is now presented, challenges us to maintain positive engagement and to carry projects through to full and successful completion. Our ability to succeed depends on our willingness to focus on quality over quantity and to maintain a regional focus.

IORARC Charter

As the Association has expanded from 7 founding members to 18 today, we believe the Association's charter needs to reflect the realities of an ever changing world. We therefore support the view of the need to carry out a review of the Charter.

Dear Chairman, Excellencies

Before closing my remarks, I would like to briefly comment on some aspects of the Senior Officials Report:

- We appreciate the efforts of Yemen in combating piracy and urge all Member States that are concerned with this alarming phenomenon to intensify collaboration and strengthen our capacity in this regard.

- We thank Yemen for announcing its contribution to the Special Fund of the Association and we urge Members to continue their generous support of this Fund.

- We support the view of holding additional follow up meetings of Senior Officials and even, at the discretion of the Chair, holding a meeting of the Council of Ministers on the margins of UN General Assembly in New York or any other conferences, as may deem appropriate.

- Oman supports the United Arab Emirates bid to host the headquarters of the International Renewable Energy Agency.

- Oman is aiming to host this year a workshop on Fisheries, with the objective of addressing topics such as regional shark tagging, laws on illegal fishing, the red-tide phenomenon and development of statistics and a database on fisheries in the region. Member States are of course invited to participate and we welcome their input on the central theme, as the workshop develops. We are looking forward to working with you on this issue.

- We count on the support of Member States in promoting our efforts in the development of the Tourism Sector in the Region.

- Finally may I join colleagues in expressing to our friends the Sri Lankan delegation, our warmest condolences for the untimely passing away of Ambassador Marleen. Our thoughts and prayers go to his family and may he rests in eternal peace.

Excellencies,

I am honoured to be here and to participate in this meeting among friends and partners. On behalf of the Sultanate of Oman delegation, I would like to express our willingness and determination to work with all Member States to achieve our common objectives and goals for the benefit, progress and prosperity of all our peoples. Thank you.

MALAYSIA

**STATEMENT BY THE HONOURABLE SENATOR A. KOHILAN
PILLAY DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER OF MALAYSIA DURING
THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 9TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL
OF MINISTERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR
REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC) SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF
YEMEN THURSDAY, 25 JUNE 2009**

Mr. Chairman
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

As this is the first time that I am taking the floor, allow me to express my thanks and gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the excellent hospitality and organization of this meeting. Allow me also to congratulate you on your taking up of the Chairmanship of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC). I also wish to congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for its leadership of the IOR-ARC over the last three years.

2. Today, there is a greater sense of the importance of the IOR-ARC as it can be a mechanism for enhancing economic interaction in the region. In this connection, we have to be more realistic in our approach to the opportunities and challenges that we face in the IOR-ARC.

3. As IOR-ARC has been in existence for some 13 years, it is important that the organization does more than that of a platform for sharing ideas. It should serve as a vehicle towards producing tangible results that have a positive impact on people's lives. We also need to act with the necessary decisiveness and speed.

Mr. Chairman,

4. Malaysia acknowledges the constraints that IOR-ARC faces in particular the under achievements of the set objectives since the inception of this organization. We are of the view that one of the key elements to address these constraints is to ensure that the Working Group of the Heads of Mission (WGHM) based in Pretoria continues to play an effective role. In this regard, the WGHM must be clear of their role and mandate. It is important that all is done to monitor the progress and speedy implementation of projects and programmes of the three bodies

of IOR-ARC namely the Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI), IOR Business Forum (IORBF) and IOR Academic Group (IORAG).

5. With regard to the proposed review of the Charter, I am pleased to state that Malaysia would welcome such an undertaking. In this regard, Malaysia notes that IOR-ARC is based on the principles of open regionalism and where decisions are arrived at on the basis of consensus. As such, we hope that this practice would continue as that observed in other regional organisations such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

6. Meanwhile, as a means to fast track the many proposed IOR-ARC's projects, Malaysia fully supports the clustering process that will enable projects to get off the ground on the basis of the 4+1 principle. In addition, we are also of the view that the Australian paper to strengthen the IOR-ARC Secretariat is a positive one and merits our consideration.

Mr. Chairman,

7. I am pleased to note that Malaysia, through the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), had taken the lead in the IOR Business Forum (IORBF) and had successfully held the inaugural Indian Ocean Rim Association of Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) Construction Business Conclave from 25 to 27 August 2008. The said conclave provided a platform for those in the public and private sectors to leverage on each other's strengths, disseminate information, networking opportunities and execute construction projects through mutually beneficial arrangements. In fact, the Construction industry has been identified as one of the main investment opportunities for Malaysia in the IOR-ARC member states.

8. In addition, Malaysia is committed to organize a Convention on Academic and Research in October 2010 through the National University of Malaysia under the IOR Academic Group (IORAG). The convention consists of two components namely the IOR-ARC Higher Education Conference and discussion on the establishment of IOR-ARC Center for Multilateral Education. Malaysia has been a supporter of the University Mobility in the Indian Ocean Region (UMIOR) programme.

Mr. Chairman,

9. The adverse state of the global economy at present has challenged Governments everywhere as they grapple with financial storm, rising unemployment and falling exports. It is, therefore, important that organizations like IOR-ARC seek ways to further enhance regional economic cooperation.

10. In this respect, a Preferential Trade Agreement may be useful as a framework to deepen and enhance economic cooperation for the mutual benefit of all our members. However, the draft of the Preferential Trade Agreement must be carefully studied before it is implemented. As for the Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investments, Malaysia will continue to cooperate, monitor and participate in programmes which protect, promote and facilitate investments.

11. I am pleased to note that Malaysia's trade with IOR ARC member countries has increased in recent years. The last 4 years has seen trade increased 50 per cent from US\$74.7 billion in 2004 to US\$112.4 billion in 2008. Trade with IOR ARC member countries represents 31.6 per cent of Malaysia's total trade in 2008. In this connection, besides the typical intra trade relations, Malaysia welcomes any ideas from IOR-ARC member countries that would attract greater interest and increased foreign investment in the services sector. Malaysia recently liberalised 27 services sub sectors, with no equity conditions imposed. These sub sectors are in health and social services, tourism, transport, business and computer and related services. Malaysia believes such efforts would help to mitigate the impact of the global recession on the Malaysian economy. Malaysia is willing to work with IOR-ARC member countries in this regard.

Mr. Chairman,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

12. I wish to reiterate that Malaysia places a lot of importance to IOR-ARC initiatives. We see it as an important mechanism to achieve our national development agenda. The future direction of IOR-ARC must be based on practical work programmes and initiatives that can benefit member countries. Clearly we have taken the necessary steps to prioritize our projects and we welcome the offer of member states to offer greater assistance and expertise in various fields. It is also my

hope that we could have greater cooperation and participation between member states and our five dialogue partners in the near future.

Mr. Chairman,

13. I wish you every success in your stewardship of our deliberations today.

I thank you.

MOZAMBIQUE



REPUBLICA DE MOZAMBIQUE

Check Against Delivery

Statement by

**His Excellency Dr. Eduardo Koloma, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
of the Republic of Mozambique**

At the

**IX Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional
Co-operation**

Sana'a, 25th June 2009

Mr. Chairperson,
Honourable Ministers and Heads of Delegations,
Distinguished Dialogue Partners and Observers,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I wish to express the gratitude of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique to the People and the Government of the Republic of Yemen for convening the IX Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation and for the warm hospitality accorded to me and to my delegation since our arrival in this historical City of Sana'a

I should like to congratulate you, Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, on your election as Chairperson of our Association.

It is our belief that under your able leadership our deliberations will be crowned with tangible results that will enable us to strengthen and promote intra IOR-ARC cooperation and a solid regional integration, that is the main goal of our Association.

From our side, we would like to assure you, Mr. Chairperson, our full collaboration in the discharge of your duties.

Our special appreciation goes to your predecessor, our colleague from the Islamic Republic of Iran, for the brilliant manner in which he fulfilled his responsibilities.

Special recognition goes also to our Senior Officials and to the Working Group of Heads of Missions in Pretoria for the extraordinary preparatory work done, which I am sure will lead this Ministerial Meeting to a successful outcome.

Mr. Chairperson,

Since the establishment of the IOR-ARC, we have been able to achieve many important goals as a result of our strong commitment. Today, and once more, our Association is called upon to redouble its efforts to overcome the various challenges facing our countries, particularly those relating to our social and economic development.

I am confident that the principles and objectives we committed ourselves to, twelve years ago, are still valid. In this regard, it is crucial that we, Member States, work more closely to secure the achievement of those noble goals reflected in our Charter.

Mr. Chairperson,

The world is witnessing an unprecedented multifaceted crisis with tremendous consequences on the global economy. The global crisis, namely the food crisis, the energy crisis and the current

global financial and economic crisis, have a negative impact on our economies, thus undermining the gains made so far and creating constraints to our efforts to fulfill national and regional development agendas. In this regard, our Association should not be a mere spectator of the global efforts being undertaken by the international community.

It is worth noting that the IOR-ARC tripartite approach in its activities, provide a space for interaction among different actors, such as Governments, Academics and private sector, all of them relevant stakeholders in the search for solutions. This approach is therefore vital in the reinforcement of our cooperation ties and in the transformation of our vision into concrete reality.

We have no doubt that reinforcing cooperation among the Members States of IOR-ARC could help to change the prevailing scenario and to reshape the world architecture towards a more fair and democratic international system, in which we all can enjoy peace, development and prosperity.

Mr. Chairperson,

The majority of our Nations are blessed with natural resources, but most of our people still live under extreme poverty. IOR-ARC constitutes a privileged forum where we can define strategies to mobilize our potential resources to uplift the social and economic conditions of our people, through pragmatic, realistic and results oriented interventions.

From the reports before us it is clear that we have been spending our scarce resources on various projects, not always focused on priority areas and only few of them delivering the much expected and needed results. We believe that the momentum posed by the current crises demands from the IOR-ARC a revision of its "modus operandi", to have a more efficient Secretariat and statutory organs.

In this context, the Government of the Republic of Mozambique is of the view that our efforts should be more coordinated and concentrated, focusing on sustainable and result-oriented initiatives.

By so doing, we would be creating the necessary conditions to reach the needs of our peoples, giving more credibility to our Association and making it more visible at the regional and international level.

In addressing the effectiveness of the Association, we are of the view that adequate consideration should also be given to the role we ought to assign to our Dialogue Partners.

Mr. Chairperson,

Allow me to take this occasion to briefly share with this august body some political developments taking place in my country, Mozambique.

This year is of particular importance to the people and the Government of Mozambique as we are preparing to undertake the fourth multiparty general elections, which will include, for the first time, the provincial elections.

These elections represent the Government's commitment to further consolidate democracy, the rule of law and to enhance the participation of all citizens in the process of national development at all levels.

Mr. Chairperson,

I should like to conclude my remarks by reaffirming the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Mozambique to work closely with all IOR-ARC Member States, not just bilaterally but also at regional and international levels, in light of the adopted principles and for the achievement of our noble goals.

I thank you!

SRI LANKA

Statement by Sri Lanka

**IOR-ARC 9th Council of Ministers' Meeting 25th June 2009,
Sana'a, Republic of Yemen**

*delivered by Hon. Hussain Bhaila Deputy Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Sri Lanka*

**Your Excellency Dr. Abubaker Abdulla AI-Qirbi, Foreign Minister of
Yemen and Chair of IOR-ARC,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First, I take this opportunity to extend my gratitude to Your Excellency as well as the staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Yemen for the steadfast support extended to me and my delegation during our hour of need. The tragic loss of Ambassador M.A.A. Marleen, who was to lead the Sri Lanka delegation to the CSO, is deeply felt by each and every member of my delegation and by those delegates sitting around this table who knew him as a colleague and a friend. My sincere appreciation goes to all distinguished delegates who expressed their condolences on this sad occasion.

Mr. Chairman, I also extend my warm congratulations and sincere appreciation to the Republic of Yemen for the excellent organisation of this Meeting, and for the warm hospitality accorded to me and my delegation. I congratulate the outgoing Chair, the Islamic Republic of Iran, for its leadership in steering the course of IOR-ARC during the last three years.

Dear colleagues, when we formed IOR-ARC in 1997, we were conscious that the Indian Ocean Rim countries had the potential to play a significant role in the world economy. The region includes some of the key emerging economies of the world. It constitutes between a quarter and a third of the world's population, thus making it a massive market and a valuable human resource base. It is well endowed with natural resources in the form of energy reserves and mineral wealth, much of which has yet to be exploited. Despite these promising characteristics, our organisation is yet a significant way off from achieving its full potential for economic development.

Despite the low volume of intra-regional trade in IOR-ARC, many of our countries have gradually become globally competitive and are in the process of developing new capacities and technological capabilities that can be Jointly harnessed. Substantial non-trade intra-regional linkages also exist among us in the form of direct foreign investment, technical collaboration and Joint ventures. These linkages, although confined largely at this stage to the region's key economies, have the potential to invigorate dormant complementarities.

Regional economic co-operation is driven, for the most part, by progressive tariff reductions by members. We may proceed on the basis that a Preferential Trade Arrangement is an instrument to foster and enhance the promotion of trade flows in the region by removing impediments. We must promote trade, but it must be mutually beneficial. It must take into account the economic asymmetries among member states.

Sri Lanka welcomes the outcome of the deliberations of the PTA Subcommittee under the WGTI in mapping the work envisaged with regard to the implementation of a Preferential Trade Agreement for IOR-ARC member states. Sri Lanka looks forward to the finalisation of the PTA Framework Agreement by the next Council of Ministers Meeting. We also hope to see a comprehensive feasibility study undertaken on the impact of a PTA among all IOR-ARC members within the timeframe envisaged.

We welcome the initiatives taken to promote investment, including the conclusion of an Agreement on the Promotion and Protection of Investment in the Region. Moves underway to share information among member countries on trade, finance, investment regimes, intellectual property, procurement procedures, customs regulations, quarantine requirements; and to reach harmonisation of standards, are indeed welcome first steps in infra-regional trade facilitation.

Mr. Chairman, Sri Lanka is deeply committed to the principles espoused by IOR-ARC. We continue to have a keen interest in its progress, having actively contributed to the Organization in various capacities. IOR-ARC today is well into its second decade. It is therefore time we made a realistic assessment of the opportunities and challenges faced by our Organisation. We must recognize the important point made by the Executive Director that in addition to institutional drawbacks, the lack of commitment among member states is a major impediment in taking projects forward. The need therefore is to collectively map a strategy that can unlock the tremendous potential of IOR-ARC. We are happy to observe that deliberations have already taken place to address this problem.

Sri Lanka endorses the views aired in the paper submitted by Australia on the need to strengthen the IOR-ARC Secretariat to make it more dynamic and results oriented. This paper can serve as a useful platform for deliberations on this subject. We are happy to observe that the Secretariat, the Working Groups and the Working Group of Heads of Mission have contributed in a positive manner towards this exercise. We also endorse the mechanisms proposed to address lack of progress within the Organisation as well as procedural lapses by setting clear terms of reference and strengthening focal points.

The revisiting of the IOR-ARC Charter in order to make the document more action oriented and more in line with the future is welcome. Let us however not lose sight of the original principles on which the Organisation was formed.

The IOR-ARC Special Fund is an innovative concept launched to get projects off the ground. Member states eventually need to come up with a practicable mechanism to finance the Special Fund. But at the moment, voluntary contributions can suffice in funding the few selected projects.

Mr. Chairman, Efforts made by IOR-ARC to cooperate on areas of common interest binding the Indian Ocean Rim countries such as disaster management and information sharing, shipping, coastal infrastructure development, tourism and fisheries are commendable. We are happy to observe that the principle of 'clustering' or the 'four plus one' formula introduced to accelerate projects, and adopting a project-based approach to implementing the work plan, have proved to be effective.

Sri Lanka welcomes the efforts put in by the Secretariat to prepare the IOR-ARC Action Plan. We endorse the proposal to focus on a few priority areas which entails the adoption of a modest yet relevant Action Plan rather than an ambitious one.

Mr. Chairman, one of the strengths of IOR-ARC is its unique three-tiered structure that brings together representatives of the government, the private sector and the academia. Given that the private sector is the engine of growth in our respective economies, greater interaction among the business communities of member countries is a dire need. We appreciate the services rendered by India with regard to the IORNET. However, provision **must be made** for greater interaction among the private sectors of member countries within the IORBF. This may be facilitated by allocating a session in the Business Forum for one-to-one business meetings. The streamlining of the issuance of business visas by member countries is essential to facilitate greater cooperation among the regional business community.

Sri Lanka recognises the contribution made by the Islamic Republic of Iran in setting up the Centre for Science and Technology Transfer in Tehran to facilitate the transfer and development of technology among member states. *The Centre must however function with a clear mandate. All members can help ensure this.*

Mr. Chairman, all of us whose shores are touched by the waters of the Indian Ocean wish to have peace, security and stability in the region. Our economic prosperity rests upon the security of our region. One cannot be separated from the other. The recent rise in instances of maritime piracy along important sea lanes in the Indian Ocean is therefore a matter of grave concern to all of us. Piracy seriously compromises the general security of the seas and the safe conduct of trade. Sri Lanka therefore welcomes the inclusion of an agenda item by our host country Yemen on combating piracy in the Gulf of Aden. We hope that the eradication of all aspects of this menace will continue to engage the attention of IOR-ARC member states.

Mr. Chairman, we must leave this meeting with a clear sense of direction on what we can do within the coming year, if we are to effectively guide the destiny of IOR-ARC. Dr. Gamini Corea, an eminent Sri Lankan and a former Secretary-General of UNCTAD observed that south-south cooperation as envisaged under IOR-ARC needs to be viewed as a strategic option for a more effective participation in the new global order. It is my sincere hope that today's deliberations will reflect a sense of our shared commitment towards exploiting that strategic option to the full.

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 congratulate Vice Chair India for

its valuable contribution to the Meeting. I assure you, Mr. Chairman, of Sri Lanka's fullest support and cooperation in the progress of IOR-ARC.

Thank you.

INDONESIA

**Statement by
H.E. T.M. Hamzah Thayeb
Head of Delegation of the Republic of Indonesia
at the General Debate**

**9th Meeting of the Council of Ministers
of Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation**

Sana'a, Yemen, 25 June 2009

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

Let me begin by expressing the Indonesian delegation's profound gratitude and sincere appreciation to you, Excellency, and to the people and Government of the Republic of Yemen for the most generous hospitality accorded to us ever since our arrival in this beautiful and historic city of Sana'a.

I would also like to extend our gratitude to H.E. Dr. Abu Baker Al-Qirbi, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Yemen, for chairing this meeting. I am confident that under your stewardship, our sessions today will be successful in achieving fruitful results which would strengthen cooperation among the IOR-ARC member countries.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Ours is an association bound by geographical location that borders the Indian Ocean. In its 12 years of existence, the IOR-ARC agreed on a number of projects and programs in many fields which, to date still require to be fully implemented. It is in this respect that, we believe, the Association should be given a new impetus to strengthen its capabilities in carrying out these activities. One fundamental approach to that end would be to amend the Charter to reflect the new current situation, while maintaining the principle of consensus among the Member States in arriving at any decisions.

At the same time, from the myriad of programs, perhaps we should concentrate and focus on those projects and programs that are viable and that are supported by all members, on those activities that are practicable and that are achievable with significant multiplier effect for the benefit of all our peoples from the three different continents.

Needless to say, these projects and programs should be undertaken in the IOR-ARC members.

Similarly important is the coordination and monitoring tasks of the Secretariat in the implementation of the activities. While we believe that it is imperative to continue our efforts in streamlining the Association, strengthening the IOR-ARC Secretariat is crucial. In this respect, we note the IORNET.com has been a useful tool in our cooperation serving as a portal to facilitate communication, undertake dialogues and exchanges of information among the IOR-ARC business communities.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

Our world is presently facing rapid changes as a result of globalization. All of us are facing not only many challenges but also opportunities. In order to be able to deal with these new realities, the IOR-ARC must adjust to the new situation by strengthening its capabilities. Cooperation in the economic and political fields alone are not sufficient, but must be complemented by cooperation in the socio-cultural field so as to enhance mutual understanding, and thus, strengthen our sense of togetherness in facing those challenges.

Food security, climate change, the environment, and promoting understanding between nations are but some of the issues we have to address.

Indonesia is of the view that cooperation in fisheries by sharing best practices among member countries should become a priority in our cooperation. As we are all aware, most of our members are endowed with marine potential. Seas and oceans are part of our way of life. Acknowledging this fact, Indonesia therefore welcomes the cooperation in the area of fisheries. In this regard Indonesia took important steps not only in exploiting the potential of our marine resources but also actively promoting the sustainability of these marine resources. In May 2009, Indonesia convened and hosted the World Ocean Conference attended by 74 countries of which 14 are members of IOR-ARC and 5 are dialogue partners. The Conference deliberated on the threats to our oceans, including Illegal, Unregulated and Undocumented (IUU) fishing, the effects of climate change on oceans as well as the role of oceans in climate change. The World Ocean Conference was also intended to complement and accelerate climate change efforts under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

In conjunction with the World Ocean Conference, Indonesia also convened the 1st Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) attended by leaders from Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste. This initiative was designed to safeguard the Coral Triangle region's extraordinary marine and coastal biological resources. Bearing in mind that the Coral Triangle area is located in the

easternmost part of the Indian Ocean Rim, we hope that there will be possibilities to link the IOR-ARC and CTI through joint efforts in the future.

We similarly welcome and support the initiative for the establishment of a maritime transport council aimed at improving the management of marine transportation comprehensively. We hope that through this program it will improve economic activities.

As to cooperation in the socio-cultural field, it is essential to enhance mutual understanding among our peoples, and thereby strengthening the people-to-people interaction. Exchanges of students, journalists, academia, artists, and networking among universities would further solidify the bonds among nations and communities in our region. This could be promoted and nurtured by the provision of scholarships such as the Developing Countries Partnership Scholarship (DCPS) and the Darmasiswa (non-degree) Scholarship programs offered by Indonesia which, last year alone, 105 students from IOR-ARC members have benefited the programs.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

As countries in the Indian Ocean Rim we share common interests in the security and safety of our sea transports. The resurgence of piracy in the recent past is threatening these trade routes. We therefore welcome the initiative by the Republic of Yemen on the issue of combating piracy in the Gulf of Aden, taking into account similar endeavors undertaken at the United Nations Security Council, while respecting the national sovereignty and territorial integrity of member states.

In conclusion, it is up to us member states of the IOR-ARC to continue our efforts in developing our cooperation to attain our objectives. Let us make haste judiciously guided by a realistic sense of what is possible and within the limits of our resources, to implement our projects and activities. By so doing, I believe that we can address the many challenges effectively and make concrete and tangible contribution for the benefit of our peoples.

I thank you.

KENYA

**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.

MADAGASCAR

**IOR-ARC Ninth Council of Ministers Meeting, Sana'a,
Republic of Yemen, June 20th- 25th 2009
Statement by H.E. RAZAFINDRANDRIATSIMANIRY MICHEL, Ambassador of
Republic of Madagascar in Libya.**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, we would like to present our thanks to the Government of Republic of Yemen, for the warm reception and hospitality which reserved for us during this ninth meeting of the Council Ministers and other related meetings of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation.

Our Foreign Minister Affairs his Excellency NY HASINA ANDRIAMANJATO would like to participate in this meeting, but the coincidence date with the celebration for the forty ninth anniversary of Madagascar Independence, his Excellency could not join with us today.

His Excellency passed a message with full success on this meeting.

Additionally, we would like to inform all Members States that what happened in Madagascar is the popular wishes, without other interpretation.

Actually, the different sphere of influence politics are looking for a consensus during the transition, in order to organize a free election, transparent and democratic, for the advent of the fourth Republic wished by Malagasy people.

Finally, Madagascar is always ready to join and participate in IOR ARC activities and wish the best for all members' states.

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

AUSTRALIA



**Statement by HE Mr Kevin Magee
Ambassador of Australia to Yemen & Head of Delegation
IOR-ARC 9th Council of Ministers Meeting Sana'a,
Republic of Yemen 25 June 2009**

Mr Chairman, Your Excellencies, distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen, Australia welcomes the assumption of the Chair by Minister Al-Qurbi, The Foreign Minister of Yemen, and thanks the Republic of Yemen for its excellent hosting and organisation of the Working Group, Committee of Senior Officials and Council of Ministers Meeting here in the historic city of Sana'a.

I would also like to express on behalf of the Australian Delegation our sincere condolences to the Government of Sri Lanka and his family on the passing of my colleague and friend, HE Ambassador A M Marleen. He will be missed.

Australia supports an effective and efficient IOR-ARC with a limited number of well thought out and effective projects.

Australia also supports a high performing IOR-ARC Secretariat and to that effect, Australia has proposed a series of recommendations in its non-paper on High Performing Secretariats, which has been circulated to IOR-ARC Member States.

Australia supports the establishment of a well-funded and effective Fisheries Support Unit that will support the conservation and sustainable management of Indian Ocean fisheries. We acknowledge the good work done on the FSU by the Sultanate of Oman.

Australia does not support the establishment of the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology, but we do not stand in the way of consensus to establish the centre or to fund it. However, Australia is of the view that membership and funding of the centre should be voluntary. Australia also believes that contribution of funding to the Special Fund should be voluntary. We acknowledge India's efforts to ensure that proper procedure is followed in the matter of the Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology Memorandum of Understanding.

The IOR-ARC should focus on a small number of practical and achievable activities to demonstrate progress and build confidence in the organisation. IOR-ARC needs to 'get the runs on the board'.

Australia encourages the implementation of the recommendations of the Australian non-paper on High Performing Secretariats.

Australia also encourages the IOR-ARC to pursue development projects in conjunction with other key capacity building organisations such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation.

Australia supports the IOR-ARC and is committed to membership but we want to see an effective and efficient organisation. To achieve this is the challenge for the IOR-ARC.

BANGLADESH

**Statement of Ambassador M Fazlul Karim at the 9th Council of Ministers
Meeting in Sana'a, Yemen, 25 June, 2009**

Mr. Chairman,
Hon'ble Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Let me at the outset convey my delegations deepest condolences at the sudden demise of our good friend and colleague Ambassador Marleen of Sri Lanka who came to Sana'a from Riyadh to lead his country's delegation to the Senior Officials meeting of IOR-ARC.

Mr. Chairman,

I feel privileged and honored to be able to speak at this august gathering at the historic city of Sana'a. I take the opportunity to convey the greetings of the Hon'ble Foreign Minister Dr. Dipu Moni to you all. She regrets that she could not attend this conference due to her prior commitments.

I extend my delegation's warmest felicitations to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election and I am confident that under your able stewardship we would have a very productive and successful meeting. I thank the Hon'ble Foreign Minister of Iran for very ably leading our Group for last three years.

We are grateful to the government of Yemen for the warm hospitality and the excellent arrangements for the conference.

Mr. Chairman,

Our meeting is taking place at a critical juncture. The economies of most of our countries are facing serious challenges from the global economic recession. Many of our socio-economic development programmes may not see the light of the day as a result of slowing down of exports and dwindling of investment. The worrying thing is that there is not yet any sign of recovery from the global economic downturn. Many of our countries are also facing existential threats from the effects of global warming and climate change.

Against such a backdrop, the 9th Council of Ministers meeting of IOR-ARC assumes special significance. The strength of our Association lies in its diversity. We must build a strong partnership to sail through these tumultuous times smoothly.

We hope that through the expansion of collaborative projects and programmes, our Association would be able to make a difference in the lives of millions. We have to move forward by taking concrete actions in integrating our economies and facing the challenges of poverty and environmental degradation together.

Distinguished delegates,

More than a decade had passed since our organization was formally launched. During the past years we have approved many projects on fisheries, tourism, natural disaster mitigation, promotion of trade, etc. However, many of the projects remain in cold storage. It is therefore time to prioritize and focus on areas which would do greater good to our peoples. Let us resolve to make the coming decade as the decade of implementation of the decisions of IOR-ARC.

Our region is endowed with immense human and natural resources which need to be utilized for the benefit of our peoples. The business community of our countries must come forward with innovative projects especially for the development of the less developed areas of the region. We need to build a strong Public-Private partnership to move our cooperation forward. The Business Forum of IOR-ARC has a special responsibility and it should focus on key areas of economic cooperation. The Academic Group which is doing a commendable job needs to pay more attention to areas like transfer of technology, climate change and tourism.

Mr. Chairman,

The Indian Ocean is the lifeline of international trade. It carries half of the world's container ships, one-third of the bulk cargo and two-thirds of the world's oil shipments. With its two billion people, the Indian Ocean Rim region is an attractive area for foreign direct investment.

The Indian Ocean Rim region can become a powerful bloc if we can realize higher level of economic integration and expand cultural cooperation. We feel that this can be achieved by establishing a preferential trade regime, promoting intra-IOR investment and facilitating cultural exchange programmes.

Mr. Chairman,

We envisage IOR-ARC as a vibrant and effective organization that embodies the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of our region. We want to see it gain more visibility and strength in the days to come. Bangladesh would bring its meaningful contribution to that end.

I thank you.

SOUTH AFRICA

STATEMENT DELIVERED BY AMBASSADOR J DAVIES AT THE GENERAL DEBATE DURING THE 9TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION (IOR-ARC), SANA'A, REPUBLIC OF YEMEN, 25 JUNE 2009

Honourable Chair
Your Excellencies
Executive Director
Ladies and gentlemen

I would like to extend a warm word of appreciation for the hospitality extended to my delegation during the 9th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation. Also, please allow me on behalf of the South African delegation to congratulate our host, for the excellent organisation of this event and the effective manner in which he has conducted the Chairmanship. I would also like to congratulate India on their assumption of the Vice-Chair of the Association. We are building on a solid foundation laid by the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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 9th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the IOR-ARC.

Members of the IOR-ARC

It is imperative that we, as members of the IOR-ARC create a conducive environment in which the goal of the IOR-ARC for regional integration and co-operation becomes a reality. Once again, I want to stress that this dream could only become a reality through conscious planning and effort, to further promote interaction in the region. We need to strive 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.

The time has come for furthering our multilateral cooperation and ensuring the implementation of decisions taken at this 9th Meeting. The Indian Ocean Rim Association is facing challenges in some areas but its strategic value is beyond doubt and members could benefit greatly from the various sectors. The economic importance of the Indian Ocean should not be underestimated. We have to increase and strengthen our cooperation in areas such as maritime transport, fisheries and science and technology.

It is with pleasure that we note that the Working Group of Heads of Missions has been very active since our last meeting in 2008 and I would like to express my appreciation for their efforts in seeking ways to achieve the objectives of the IOR-ARC Charter. After studying the Sun City Outcome document it becomes clear that the IOR-ARC has a new focus and that newly-identified projects once implemented will be to the benefit of all member countries. 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.

The IOR-ARC should not only serve as a platform for sharing ideas but serve as a vehicle towards producing tangible results that have a qualitative impact on peoples' lives. A key element of making this a reality is the strengthening of the necessary institutional capacity. I would like to 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. South Africa is committed to this organisation and its activities and objectives. In this regard, we have seconded an official to Mauritius to augment the capacity of the Secretariat to implement our joint initiatives, and India has indicated that they are about to make a similar secondment.

Once again, South Africa would like to stress the importance of forging inter-regional linkages with other inter-regional initiatives.

Distinguished Members of the IOR-ARC

I hope this 9th Meeting will be further evidence of our enduring relationship but more importantly look firmly ahead toward the enormous potential the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation hold for all of us.

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

TANZANIA

**STATEMENT BY MR. AZIZ SHEWEEN, ACTING AMBASSADOR OF THE UNITED
REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA; RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA; AT THE IOR-ARC
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, 25TM JUNE 2009; SANA'A; REPUBLIC OF YEMEN.**

Honorable Chairperson;

Honorable Ministers;

Honorable Executive Director;

Your Excellencies Ambassadors;

Distinguished Delegates;

Ladies and Gentlemen...

Honorable Chairperson;

Allow me to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the Government of the Republic of Yemen for the excellent facilities availed to us and the hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in the beautiful city of Sana'a. the facilities extended to us will go a long way towards making our meeting successful.

Honorable Chairperson;

I would like also to express my sincere gratitude to the leaders and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the role they played during their tenure of office as Chair of the Association and congratulate the Republic of Yemen for assuming the Chair. Tanzania will continue to support and work closely with our Chairperson for the advantage of the region as a whole.

Honorable Chairperson;

In one day of our meeting we have an important task before us. We have to review implementation of the Council's decisions for the past year and make new decisions on programmes for the coming year.

Honorable Chairperson;

As we gear ourselves for the next year, allow me to make proposals aimed at strengthening the Association. Our proposals are in line with what is reflected in the Australian paper.

Honorable Chairperson,

We need a strong and dynamic and an effective Secretariat. We also need •to identify a few common areas of common interest which are not contradicting our membership in other Regional Communities. For this purposes, we need to undertake a study on implication of our commitments in other Regional communities and identify ways to manage such implications. Furthermore, it is our view that Working Groups should meet well before the Council of Ministers in order to give time for national level consultations at our capitals.

Honorable Chairperson;

Farther more we need to have a fresh look on the charter with a view to reflect the realities but also to attain a smooth and efficient running of our esteemed organization.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to convey our deepest condolences to the Government of Sri Lanka for the sudden demise of Ambassador Marleen, Sri Lanka CSO representation. Our heart and prayers go to the family of the late Ambassador and may the Lord rest his soul in eternal peace.

With these few remarks, let me end by assuring you my full support and that of the United Republic of Tanzania.

I thank you very much.

IOR/9COM/REP/09/07

CHINA

**Dear Chair,
Distinguish guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen, friends:**

Today, the 9th Council of Ministers Meeting of IOR-ARC is formally sitting in Yemen. On behalf of the government of the People's Republic of China, I'd like to present the passionate congratulations on the conference and cordial greetings to each distinguish guest and all participants present today.

As one of the dialogue partners of IOR-ARC, China esteems the objective of IOR-ARC, supports the work direction and the keystones on cooperation determined by the Association. We would like to work with all the member states to enhance the cooperation in India Ocean Rim region. Since a long period of time, China enjoys friendly political relationship with the IOR-ARC members and the two sides maintain close economic exchange. In 2008, the trade between China and IOR-ARC members totaled 390.6 billion USDs, 26.9% higher than the previous year. The proportion of the trade between China and IOR to China's total foreign trade is rising year by year, which was 13.4%, 14.2% and 15.2% from year 2006 to 2008 respectively.

The India Ocean Rim is a distinctive region across Asia, Africa and Oceania with diversified and abundant resources and enjoys convenient transportation. China and IOR region share high economic complementarities and common interests in many aspects. Thus, the cooperation potential between both sides should be massive.

Under the background of accelerating development of economic globalization and regional economic integration, China would like to further deepen the economic and trade cooperation with IOR-ARC and its member states to push forward the regional and international economy development. Therefore, China suggests:

First, actively carry out substantial cooperation and cope with the international finance crisis with joint efforts. Currently, the international finance crisis is still expanding and deepening, which makes the real economy be down warding. Many countries are facing great challenges of economy recession.

By making full use of IOR-ARC as an effective platform, we should positively explore substantive cooperation in some critical sectors, such as: human resource development, Seaport development, transportation, energy, tourism and SMEs, as well as speed up structure adjustment, stabilize market, accelerate growth, create job opportunities, improve people's living-hood, reduce the negative impacts of the international finance crisis by every possible means.

Second, launch dialogue on deepening regional economic cooperation. In recent years, China has proactively participated in regional cooperation with APEC, ASEM, SCO, etc.; steadily promoted the development process on free trade area and conducted negotiation on free trade area with countries and areas including IOR-ARC members. Thus, China has been playing an active role in promoting the mutual development with cooperative partners and pushing forward the international trade liberalization and facilitation. Since its establishment, IOR-ARC has done a vast amount of effective work to boost the economic cooperation in the region. We hope it continue to present its own characteristics and advantages in regional economic cooperation. China is ready to open dialogue and share the experience with IOR-ARC on this aspect.

Third, make effort to improve the trade and investment facilitation in the region. Under the circumstance of tariffs lowing and the non-tariff measures reducing in the world, to improve trade and investment facilitation level becomes more important. Various trade and investment facility measures, for instance: the higher transparence in policies, simplification and coordination in customs procedures, standard conformity and accreditation, investment promotion, encouragement on flowing of business people, E-business, etc., are conducive to raising efficiency, reducing cost, enhancing the predictability and accelerating the trade development. China is willing to strengthen communication, share experience and enhance the cooperation with IOR-ARC members

I'd like to conclude my speech with hearted congratulations on the successful conclusion of the meeting and sincerely wish everybody enjoy your time here in Sana'a.

Thanks.

EGYPT

**Statement of His Excellency Mr. Mohamed Morsy Awad Ambassador of
the Arab Republic of Egypt to Yemen**

**Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Allow me in the beginning to join my colleagues in congratulating H.E. Dr. Abu Bakr al Qirby for assuming the responsibilities of chairmanship of the 9th Ministerial Conference of the IOR-ARC.

Allow me also to convey to your Excellencies a message of greetings from H.E. Ahmed Abul-Gheit the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

It is a great pleasure for us to participate as a Dialogue Partner in the 9th Ministerial Conference of the IOR-ARC in Sana'a, the historical capital of united Yemen.

I believe that our participation in this conference reflects the linkages between the Indian Ocean and the Red and Mediterranean seas countries in the sense that we share the same interests and concerns.

I take this opportunity to express our willingness to participate actively in all activities and projects of this esteemed Association which are of mutual benefit to us and other Member States. This willingness stems from our strong conviction of the importance of deepening all avenues of cooperation between the Dialogue Partners and the Member States, an issue which we believe has been emphasized during this important conference.

We wish the conference all success and we are convinced that the deliberations of this meeting will achieve fruitful results for the benefit of all Member States and Dialogue Partners.

Thank You.

FRANCE

Excellencies,

As a dialogue partner, France is very pleased to be with you at that council of Ministers to share views on the several topics on your agenda. We would like to congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for its very active Presidency and have already exchange through the channel of our special representative based in Mauritius, on several issues with the new Executive Director M. Morteza Sarmadi. I seize this occasion to warmly praise his predecessor M. Samsudeen. My thanks are especially directed to the new Yemeni Presidency for the very efficient organization of this event and the support provided to our delegation.

As I mentioned we have shared our views with the Executive Director on several issues that were on our agenda in preparation of this meeting. We paid a special attention on two specific domains: fisheries and natural disaster risk management. On these two subjects and others, the local authorities from the French region La Reunion will receive with a great attention requests to send experts to technical meetings.

Our interest for these subjects is clearly linked with the fact that France has maritime borders in the Indian Ocean. We of course share same concerns with all the countries represented here. We are indeed part of that region and therefore, we might well in the future apply for full membership. If so, it would be much easier for us to mobilize financial support and human resources for projects managed by IOR-ARC. Our actual status does not allow us to have a sufficient say on their development.

For the time being, our activities in the region are focused on the Indian Ocean Commission area, which we chair this year.

We nevertheless are also very much involved in the region at large into the challenges of fighting piracy. France was first to help by November 2007, the Food World Program to military secure the delivering of humanitarian aid to Somalia. Our forces carried actions against pirate attacks on French boats and we felt necessary to have appropriate Security Council resolutions on that problem which reached a peak in 2008 with 168 attacks and 43 captures. On December of that year, the European Union launched the so-called Atalanta Naval Operation (13 ships, 3 planes, 1200 military personnel) to which we strongly participate.

It was recently decided to extend Atalanta operation for one more year. Results are good: Atalanta secured the two thirds of the maritime traffic in the gulf and all the World Food Program ships could deliver food to the Somalian population.

These measures are not sufficient. Atalanta is now promoting a more integrated policy in three major points in order to:

- enhance operational cooperation with 9 non European countries and two other initiatives: *NATO naval intervention* and the US lead coalition *Combined Task Forces 151*
- sign judicial agreements to deal with captured pirates: one was signed with Kenya and another one with Seychelles
- reinforce the national coastal guard forces in the region and consolidate the Somalian State. Capacity building operations will include the formation by France of a Somalian battalion.

Atalanta cannot face itself this challenge without increasing the capacity of the coastal countries to protect their territorial water. That goal cannot be reached without international cooperation.

We thank Yemen for its efforts in this field.

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

JAPAN

**Your Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I should like to congratulate the Member Governments and Secretariat of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation for a series of useful and constructive discussions taking place at various levels during the week. I also wish to pay tribute to the Yemeni Ministry of Foreign Affairs for its commendable efforts to host this Ninth Meeting of Council of Ministers here in a Sana'a.

As a dialogue partner, the Japanese Government has been participating in the meetings of Council of Ministers since its second meeting in Mozambique in March 1999, and ever since has been following with keen interest discussions on ways and means to strengthen regional cooperation in a variety of areas including trade and investment, science and technology, the environment and natural disasters, and maritime security. The Japanese Government will continue to do so, in the light of very friendly and cooperative relations it has nurtured over the years with the Indian Ocean Rim Association and each one of its Member Governments and dialogue partners.

Let me conclude my brief remarks by wishing you all a successful conclusion of this Council of Ministers Meeting later this afternoon which, I am confident, will mark another major step forward in the development of regional cooperation in many areas of vital importance to the whole region. Thank you.