

STATEMENT BY HON. DR. CYRIL A. CHAMI (MP), DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA AT SEVENTH MEETING OF INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION, TEHRAN, THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN 7TH – 8TH MARCH, 2007

Chairperson,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me join you and other speakers in extending my delegation's sincere condolences to the government of the People of Indonesia for the pain suffered from an earthquake and a plane crash which happened consecutively this week.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also on behalf of the Delegation of the United Republic of Tanzania take this opportunity to thank the Government and the people of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the wonderful reception and generous hospitality accorded to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city of Tehran. This is a reflection of continued cooperation between the Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation and a pointer to Iran's commitment to our organization's objectives and targets for tangible achievements in the path of development.

Since the meeting started at the officials' level, we have been exchanging experiences, sharing information and setting future strategies in various fields through the Working Groups for Academic; Trade and Investment and the Business Forum. We are encouraged by achievements so far, but we are also aware of the challenges ahead of us particularly in respect of the need for prioritizing projects and for ensuring various projects mature into realizable programmes.

Chairperson,

Regarding the progress in the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group, the United Republic of Tanzania is following with interest developments of the various proposed studies in Trade and Trade Related Economic Cooperation, Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Sources of Pollution and their Impact on the Marine Environment of the Indian Ocean, among others. We also appreciate the proposals and offers for University Exchange Programme, specifically those offered by the Vaal University of Technology of South Africa, the University of Mauritius and the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We shall encourage our Universities to participate in this programme in order to build the technical capacities of students and of respective Universities in producing the required human capital for socio-economic development.

Chairperson,

Trade for development is emerging to be a big force for realizing economic development in the current globalized world of competition. Openness of economies is nowadays a pointer to how a country is positioned to face up to the challenges of development. That is why we need to accord the necessary priority to programmes promoted by the Working

Group on Trade and Investment. Trade and investment cannot take place if the business community is not involved. The Business Forum as an institutional structure of the Association has a very big role to play. One of their deliberations is to have constant trade missions and trade fairs among member states. Promotion of Trade amongst ourselves calls for exchange of information which will make it possible to understand the potentials existing in individual Member States, procedures to be followed and institution to work with. The United Republic of Tanzania will provide to the Secretariat all pending information within the agreed period of three months. This is in particular to issues of Custom Procedures and Investment Regimes. We thank the Sultanate of Oman for their efforts and inputs in establishing the Fisheries Support Unit for the region. We also welcome the initiative for establishing the Indian Ocean Preferential Trade Arrangement. This will be another instrument for promoting trade among the Member States. However, as a way forward we need to encourage those Member States which are ready to proceed establishing the PTA. Others may join later after assessing its compatibility with their membership in other regional Trade Arrangements. Tanzania is participating in trade arrangements under SADC aiming to attain a Free Trade Area in the year 2008 and a Customs Union in year 2010. At the same time Tanzania is a member of the East African Community Customs Union. In addition to promoting trade under a PTA framework, Tanzania will stand ready to utilize other arrangements like bilateral agreements for trade and cooperation under Joint Permanent Commissions.

Chairperson,

As we enter in our ten years anniversary let me in concluding refer to the economic and investment regime of Tanzania. Investment climate in Tanzania has in the past several years been rapidly changing thus transforming it into one of the most investors-friendly countries in the region. Tanzania has in place a number of pro-investment and market oriented economic policies. Tanzania is endowed with numerous tourist attractions among them being National Parks, the Ngorongoro crater, Mount Kilimanjaro, which is the highest peak in Africa and the spice Islands of Zanzibar. Tourists from your countries are welcome to visit these attractive areas.

Chairperson,

May I conclude my statement by congratulating our Secretariat for a well done job despite being very thin on the ground. We shall continue to work closely with the Secretariat and support it in its programmes. It is my hope that the Secretariat will be strengthened to cope with the work load entrusted to them so as to deliver effectively to the member states.

I wish our deliberation at this Seventh Council of Ministers' Meeting a success.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.