

Joint Press Conference by Hon Minister Boolell and Hon Minister Sayed Hossen
11th floor Conference Room of the Ministry,
3 July 2013 at 10.00 hours

To be Present

Mr T.P Seetharam, High Commissioner of India
Ambassador K.V Bhagirath, Secretary-General IOR-ARC Secretariat

Mr R. Jadoo, Secretary-General Designate, Mauritius Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Mr K. Poonosamy, Managing Director, Board of Investment
Representative from Enterprise Mauritius

Mrs U. Dwarka-Canabady, Ag. Secretary for Foreign Affairs
Mrs G. Makoonlall, Permanent Secretary
Mr P. Doongoor, High Commissioner, Malaysia
Mr H. Lam Vo Hee, High Commissioner, Mozambique
Mr A. Jagessur, High Commissioner, New Delhi
Mr M.D Phokeer, Director, RID

Let me first extend my thanks to the High Commissioner of India, representing the Chair of IOR-ARC and co-host with Mauritius for the IOR-ARC first Economic and Business Conference. I also thank my colleague, Minister Sayed-Hossen and Ambassador Bhagirath.

IOR-ARC Economic and Business Conference (EBC)

- The Organisation of this conference was mentioned in the banquet speech which the Hon Prime Minister delivered on 11 March 2013 in the context of the celebrations of the 45th anniversary of our independence.
- It is the first Economic and Business Conference being held at Ministerial level and gathering policy planners/decision makers of government/public agencies and captains of trade and industry/private sector businesses of 20 IOR-ARC Member States and six Dialogue Partners. To-date, 10 Ministers (Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Japan, Mauritius, Oman, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, United Arab Emirates) have confirmed participation and some 350 delegates will attend the Conference.

- The Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation (IOR-ARC) has huge untapped economic potential which can be effectively implemented through trade and commerce for economic development of the Indian Ocean region.
- The main objective of the EBC is to promote, strengthen and expand trade within the region. High level profile stakeholders from IOR-ARC Member States will be encouraged to undertake the necessary networking with a view to forging new partnerships in sectors such as Agro-Industry, Marine Resources, Tourism, Shipping and Services amongst others.
- The first EBC will thus discuss issues having an important bearing for deepening economic cooperation in the IOR region.

Theme and Programme of EBC

- The first IOR-ARC Economic and Business Conference will be held under the general theme “**Deepening Economic linkages for Balanced, Inclusive and Sustainable Growth**”. The themes that would be discussed in four panel sessions on Day 1, that is, 4th of July 2013:
 - (i) Unlocking the potential of the services sector in the IOR-ARC Region (ICT, Tourism and Financial Sector);
 - (ii) Enhancing trade and investment in the IOR-ARC region;
 - (iii) Creating agri-business linkages, addressing food security and sustainable development; and
 - (iv) Harnessing the potential of the Ocean economy.
- Day 2, that is, 5 July 2013 will mostly be devoted to Business to Business meetings. Early in the morning, on 5 July 2013, there will be a Ministerial panel session, comprising the current IOR-ARC Troika made up of India –Chair; Australia – Vice-Chair; Yemen – Past Chair and two other Member States, Indonesia (the incoming Vice-Chair) and Mauritius as co-host. The Anchor for this session will be Mrs Naina Kidwai, President of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). There will also be a closed meeting of Trade and Investment Promotion Agencies. This will not be open to the media. ***N.B: A programme of the meeting will be circulated to the media.***

To give the floor first to High Commissioner of India and then Minister Sayed-Hossen to add a few words.

**Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Regional Integration and International Trade
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