

CLOSING REMARKS

Graham Anderson

Director, IORA

The honourable ...

From an IORA Secretariat perspective this has really been a most successful event and I believe a round of applause to all the participants will be in order.

The Secretariat would also once again want to extend its appreciation to the Seychelles Government, the Australian Government and UN Women for their excellent arrangements and hospitality extended to the delegations Thank you very much.

Also thank you very much to all delegates for the constructive discussions and positive engagements throughout the two days' of discussions and debate and I have no doubt that what has been achieved here - the Mahe Women's Empowerment Declaration - will go considering the establishment of a Core Group with it evolving into a full fledged IORA Working Group.

Indonesia as the incoming IORA Chair in October 2015 has confirmed their commitment as IORA Chair to keep the momentum on this issue during their term as Chair. And I can also give you an assurance that South Africa as incoming IORA vice Chair and subsequent Chair after Indonesia in 2017 would without any doubt continue this approach considering the high profile this issue received in the country.

I can confirm that the Secretariat, under the guidance of the Member States, is ready to play its role in the process and you can be sure of our commitment and enthusiasm to promote and continue to strengthen women empowerment in the Indian Ocean Region.

Mauritius with the support of India will be hosting the First IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference in Mauritius on 2 and 3 September gender priority will receive attention. All of which will be conveyed to the IORA Council of Ministers and its related meetings that will take place in Padang, Indonesia, at the end of October 2015.

We are convinced that gender empowerment should become an annual IORA scheduled event.

I wish you all the best with your travelling home and should you have some time spare before departure please visit this jewel of the Indian Ocean.

Thank you.