

## AUSTRALIA

### Opening remarks by The Hon Julie Bishop MP, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Chair of IORA - IORA Council Of Ministers' Meeting

Speech, E&OE

Perth

9 October 2014

I am honoured to welcome you back to my home town of Perth, Australia's Indian Ocean Rim capital, for the 14<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers' Meeting.

In the year since we last met I have sought to visit a number of IORA countries in order to better understand the different perspectives that our region has to offer. So far I have visited about half of our number so by 2015 I'm sure I will have visited the other half.

It is quickly apparent to those who have travelled across the region that the Indian Ocean Rim is marked by great diversity in cultures, climates and people – socially, economically, politically. Yet we all share a bond with the ocean on which we depend for security, sustenance and growth.

We have invested time and effort in continuing to build IORA as the premier organisation of the region and I believe we have achieved a good deal. Our international profile is growing with renewed interest across the region in joining IORA with the Maldives, Myanmar and Somalia all working towards membership.

We have continued to seek closer links with prominent regional and global organisations including the United Nations, the African Ocean and the Indian Ocean Commission. We have given our least developed and developing members better access to IORA's special fund to encourage broader based participation across the region.

We have carved out a greater role for dialogue partners in IORA in recognition of the important role they play in our region's future prosperity. And I warmly welcome the representatives of our dialogue partner countries, particularly those who have travelled from their capitals. I believe the United States once more wins the prize for having travelled the most distance, thank you Ambassador Shannon.

Last year in Perth IORA made a landmark decision to establish women's empowerment as a cross-cutting issue across IORA's six priority areas. In 2014 we have seen progress on this goal. Australia and India convened IORA's inaugural economic empowerment events in Kuala Lumpur, where Australia's Ambassador for Women and Girls Natasha Stott-Despoja chaired the event, and, in Hyderabad, taking the first steps on the IORA path to unlocking the economic potential of women across the Indian Ocean.

IORA members have embraced a range of new initiatives across IORA's six priority areas including in aquaculture, renewable energy, customs and trade facilitation, ocean science and maritime security. We have sought to increase the opportunities for regional businesses to connect including through the IORA Business Week events held in parallel to IORA's official meetings. The connection between our respective chambers of commerce has great potential to develop into a vibrant network.

Today we will turn our attention to the coming year and build on the positive momentum generated in recent times. For the first time we will have the opportunity through this Council of Ministers' Meeting to hear from senior business representatives from India, Indonesia and Australia on the benefits of greater connectivity in the Indian Ocean region.

We will seek to agree on a set of core principles for driving sustainable economic growth in our region, our economic diplomacy declaration should be demonstration of our collective will to ensure the region is prosperous and strong.

We will look to build on the strength and solidarity shown in the face of the tragic events surrounding Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 by committing to work even more closely to protect those that traverse the Indian Ocean through a Memorandum of Understanding on search and rescue cooperation.

The inaugural Indian Ocean Dialogue, hosted by India, was a highlight of the IORA calendar. We should continue the dialogue and through it create a space for creative discussion on pressing issues of the region. Inspired by India's example, Australia proposes to host the second Indian Ocean Dialogue in 2015 to discuss overarching strategic issues concerning our region and we will work closely with other member states to ensure its success. IORA is the only Ministerial-level forum that spans the Indian Ocean and is uniquely positioned to shape our neighbourhood in a way that forges closer ties and delivers greater peace and prosperity to the Indian Ocean region.

As Australia enters its final year as chair I urge delegates to maintain the strong momentum generated over recent years. We must continue to revitalise IORA giving a stronger international voice to issues which are important to the Indian Ocean region and we must deliver initiatives that will be a real benefit to our diverse membership.

I was pleased to be able to visit the IORA Secretariat in Port Louis, Mauritius last month and I thank Ambassador Bhagirath and his team at the Secretariat for their dedicated work in taking forward IORA's agenda and in preparing for this meeting.

I now invite the Secretary-General to make his opening remarks.

**INDONESIA**

**Statement By H.E. Yuri O. Thamrin, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs  
Republic of Indonesia**

**At the 14<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers  
Indian Ocean Rim Association  
Perth, 9 October 2014**

Honourable Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia and Chairperson of the Indian Ocean Rim Association,  
Distinguished Ministers and Heads of Delegation,  
Ambassdaor K.V. Bhagirat, Secretary General of IORA,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, on behalf of my delegation, let me extend my appreciation to you, Minister Bishop, for the warm welcome and hospitality that have been accorded to us. I am confident that under your leadership, the deliberations of this meeting will result in a fruitful outcome. Let me also extend my appreciation to Ambassador Bhagirat and the IORA Secretariat for its hard work in support of the Association.

Minister Marty Natalegawa requested that I convey his regret in not being able to attend today's meeting. He asked that I kindly convey his warmest wishes to Your Excellencies present here today.

IORA has achieved greater significance after 17 years of existence. As the premier regional organization in the Indian Ocean, it has strengthened its role and its effectiveness in seizing various opportunities for cooperation. The six priority areas, set forth in 2011, serve as the basis for developing flagship programs and initiatives that could bring concrete benefits for our people's lives.

Nonetheless, there are still more opportunities to explore in building and expanding our mutually beneficial cooperation. Foremost is the need to raise people's awareness regarding the potentials that our Association can bring in enhancing common welfare. Such can be achieved by involving a wide range of stakeholders. In this regard, Madame Chairperson, I commend your active approach towards the involvement of business sectors in IORA. I also urge that we continue to explore other avenues where our peoples can connect and further engage.

Madame Chairperson,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Later this year, we will commemorate the tragic Tsunami disaster which impacted the lives of many of our citizens a decade ago. Since then, an era of relative peace and stability has allowed for a condition conducive to development and welfare in many countries.

Our region's strategic value, to the world and to the region itself, has affected many changes to the dynamics of the region during the past decade. The interests of littoral and non-littoral states, geo-political and geo-economical changes, traditional and non-traditional challenges, must be managed carefully if we are to preserve our region's security and stability.

Against this backdrop, we should further strengthen our cooperation in the Indian Ocean region by building trust through confidence-building measures. We should also ensure the inclusiveness and the active participation in IORA, enabling all of our peoples to reap the benefit from our cooperation. In this regard, existing regional mechanisms such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium and Indonesia's own International Maritime Security Symposium have the potentials to be expanded and accommodate the participation of members of our Association.

Indonesia is also of the view that a more structured engagement with the dialogue partners would be beneficial to enhance cooperation within and outside of IORA. We should also consider exploring ways to interconnect the future of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean. Bridging the two oceans that connect us and not divide us may lead to new architectures which will further guarantee peace, prosperity and stability between the regions.

We also need to promote a more comprehensive connectivity in our region: to engrave deeper trust and understanding among our nations, to promote more trade and investment between our economies, and to build a better sense of understanding and community among our people.

We convey our deep appreciation for Australia's leadership as Chair for the past two years. We are honoured and look forward to IORA members' support to Indonesia as new Chair for the next period and to continue intensifying the close collaboration of the new troika.

Let me conclude by reiterating Indonesia's commitment to advance IORA's cooperation for the pursuit of our common interest and prosperity.

Thank you.

INDIA

Ministry of External Affairs  
(MER Division)

14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of IORA Council of Ministers: Perth, Australia

Statement by Ms. Sujata Mehta, Secretary (ER & DPA)

Excellencies, Ministers

Distinguished delegates,

Secretary General,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to be in this beautiful city of Perth for the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of Council of Ministers of Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

I would like to thank the Foreign Minister of Australia and colleagues in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs for the excellent arrangements made for the meeting and the generous and warm hospitality extended to us all. I convey the greetings of my Minister to you Madam Chair and her regret that she was unable to be here.

We in India appreciate the role of the Chair, Australia and the Vice-Chair, Indonesia for providing visionary leadership to IORA.

The Focus on women empowerment across the 6 priority areas, which were identified during India's chairmanship, is among the most important contributions of Australia and IORA for which I would like to record special appreciation. IORA events focusing on women empowerment, recently hosted by India and Australia, have received overwhelming positive response.

Congratulation to the Secretary General, Ambassador Bhagirath, for the unanimous recommendation of the Senior Officials for his appointment as the Secretary General for the second term.

Madam Chair,

The waters of the Indian Ocean brought us together and connect our countries on the littoral with each other and these waters have been an inalienable part of our destinies. This Ocean has helped us in reaching out to each other as well as to far off countries. Linkages facilitated over time in the cross fertilization of cultures, ideas and overall growth and development.

However, the Indian Ocean also presents shared challenges ranging in varying measures. These challenges include terrorism, radicalism, piracy and several non-traditional security threats that have a direct bearing on peace and stability in our region. The transnational nature of these challenges necessitates coordinated and multilateral approaches.

India hosted the Indian Ocean Dialogue in September this year in Kochi to bring together officials and scholars on a common platform in a bid to give momentum to our collective efforts to better understand the shared challenges and opportunities that the Indian Ocean offers. The Dialogue came up with a set of recommendations encapsulated in the document, "Kochi Consensus" that has been circulated here. The detailed examination of these recommendations through specific studies would help us understand the connections within our region and give valuable insights in our endeavours to build IORA further. Going by one of the recommendations of the Dialogue, India will work to give regularity to the Indian Ocean Dialogue as an event under IORA that may be convened periodically by other members who wish to host it and in India. We look forward to working closely with Australia in the next edition of the Dialogue.

The issues related to economic development and trade among our countries also need special attention. In this context, I welcome Australia's initiatives towards greater engagement with the business communities of the region and thanked the presenters this morning for sharing their observations and insights in this regard.

The IORA Special Fund plays an important role in facilitating efforts of the member countries in further consolidation of cooperation and exchanging of ideas and experiences in IORA. I am happy to announce a contribution of US\$ 100, 000/- by India to the Special Fund.

I am also happy to reiterate India's offer of special training course for diplomats of IORA countries as has been done in past.

In addition to convening the Indian Ocean Dialogue periodically, India will also host an IORA cultural event each year and also pursue to other initiatives pertaining to the six priority areas.

We will shortly depute a Research Analyst to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat.

We in India, stands firm in our commitment to further strengthening the Association and work with other members in achieving the goals of IORA.

Thank you Madam Chair.

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BANGLADESH

Statement by Secretary (Maritime Affairs Unit), Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rear Admiral Md. Khurshed Alam (Retd), BN at the Council of Ministers of IORA in Perth, Australia on 09 October 2014

Hon'ble Chair, Hon. Julie Bishop, Foreign Minister of Australia  
Hon'ble Vice-Chair, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My Foreign Minister asked me to convey his sincere regrets that he could not attend this meeting in view of his scheduled preoccupation. He, however, conveys his best wishes for the success of the meeting. Madame Chair, please allow me to our warm congratulations to you for presiding over the meeting. Let me also express our sincere thanks to the Government of Australia for the excellent arrangements made for this meeting and for the generous hospitality extended me and my delegation in this beautiful city of Perth. I would also like to express our deep appreciation to the Secretary General and his team for the efficient way of conducting the business of the IORA.

Madame Chair,

We are all aware that without oceanic trade, the barriers of international commerce would be insurmountable and the history of the world would have been vastly different. Today the Indian Ocean region is the economic highway of the world. The traffic at sea has increased by 470% since 1970 and is likely to triple in the next 30 years. 66% of the world's oils shipments, 33% of its bulk cargo and 50% of the world's container traffic pass through its waters. The oil arteries of the world flow through the Indian Ocean and any impediment to the free flow of energy resources could have a profound effect on regional as well as global economies.

In terms of trade volume, the Indian Ocean has emerged as one of the busiest sea-routes in a global basis. All the countries of the IORA uphold that freedom of navigation is essential for economic prosperity of our people and maintain stability to a large extent at the global level. The region is however witnessing an ever increasing variety of security threats to maritime peace and stability. Indeed today's most pervasive threat comprises non state actors. These non-state actors all have a relative anonymity of individuality and intent both of which impact our policy options especially on the maritime safety and security Maritime piracy, illegal drug trafficking, armed robbery, human trafficking etc. not only threatens the shipping industry but also the well-being of the people in land. Thus IORA should rightly place topmost priority on ensuring the safety and security at sea.

The region is also witness to 70% world's natural calamities like cyclone, earthquake, tsunami in regular intervals. The swift response to the tragedy of Tsunami effectively demonstrated to the global community the unique brotherhood of the seas and the ability of maritime forces to not just work alongside each other but also to catalyse and facilitate cooperation amongst nations. Natural disasters adversely impact on development and cause economic and social stresses which may sow the seeds

of security threats. The vulnerability of our region to natural disasters only adds to the complexity of the security milieu.

In fact almost 80% of the human fatalities in the last decade in natural disasters have been in Asia. At the same time maritime medium often provides the most suitable access to disaster hit areas as large scale relief can be deployed from the sea. Every year, besides claiming human lives, the disasters paralyse the coastal economies in a major way. Knowledge and information sharing, capacity building in the auspices of IORA will mitigate the risk and effect of the disasters in the region. A cooperative mechanism focuses on opportunities versus threats, on optimism over fear and on confidence instead of doubt. It recognises the challenges imposed by the uncertain conditions in a time of rapid change and makes proactive assistance and disaster response crucial elements to building relationships across nations. IORA should put concrete effort to save the Indian Ocean from safety hazards caused by maritime accidents.

The economy of this region is growing rapidly. Obviously, more integrated trade relations between the Member States would help accelerate the economic growth in the region. It only can be achieved by trade liberalization and foreign direct investment within the region. In this regard, Bangladesh would continue to pursue the feasibility of establishing a Preferential Trade Arrangement for the Member States. It goes without saying that the communication between the business communities of the member states should be enhanced and deepened to bolster our economic ties.

#### **Distinguished Delegates,**

IORA should strive for strategizing sustainable utilization of marine fisheries resources. The menace of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing should be controlled and eliminated by coordinated approach. Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) of the IORA is expected to strengthen our effort by providing skilled human resource, knowledge and strategy. We should deal with issues of productivity of fish and fisheries, pollution and ecosystem health, social economic conditions and governance. One of the major limitations we have is inadequate human resources to govern the ocean economy/blue economy. Cooperation in the field of science and technology, research, and academia will reduce the knowledge gap between the Member States.

Member States have immense potentials in tourism sector. Cooperation in visa regime, better air, road and marine connectivity within the region will realize the vast potentials in this sector. Bangladesh believes that women's participation in economic activities is equally important for poverty alleviation and socio-economic development of the region.

Artisanal and sustainable fishing, mariculture, biotechnology, maritime tourism and coastal development should be the focus for the concept of the Ocean/Blue Economy. We must consider ways and means on how to drive the concept of blue economy forward in alleviating poverty, employment generation and establish its position not only as a sector for sustainable growth but also as a crucial driver for the wider economy and a key contributor to the Blue economy agenda.

#### **Madam Chair,**

Like our past, our future is also inter-connected. A concerted effort by the Member States can realize our shared goal of promoting the welfare of the peoples by improving their standards of living



and quality of life. Let us hope and pursue for a result-oriented IORA that will ensure a prosperous present for us and a promising future for tomorrow's generations.

Today, IORA is going to make a history. The signing of the Charter of the Organization will bind us to our commitments and at the same time, it will also provide us with an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to building a more stable, secure and prosperous Indian Ocean region fostering maritime cooperation and closer ties, ensuring progress, solidarity and sustainability among the rim countries.

**I thank you, Madam Chair.**

UNION OF COMOROS

Statement By H.E. Mr. Hodhoaer Inzouddine, Principal Secretary  
Ministry of External Relations

At the 14<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers  
Indian Ocean Rim Association  
Perth, 9 October 2014

Madam Chair and Excellencies,

I express my most sincere gratitude and appreciation for the hospitality extended by Australia in hosting us in Perth.

Situated in the middle of the blue waters of the Indian Ocean, the Union of Comoros holds its association with the IORA close to its heart. Since its incorporation in 2012, Comoros has only enjoyed and benefitted from the camaraderie and support of the IORA Member States

Membership of the Union of Comoros in the IORA is a decisive step to see the country become heavily involved in regional cooperation. Over the past year, the country has adopted a strategy for regional cooperation in order to enhance the county's development. The IORA thus represents a key driver in the region to heighten regional cooperation and integration.

The facilitation and development of trade between the Member States of the IORA and the Union of Comoros are the main challenges which need to be tackled at various levels, such as reducing international dependency in terms of food security, create jobs and improve the standard of living of the population and develop capacity building.

As we reflect upon the formulation of the Ocean or Blue Economy concept, I am confident, Madam Chair, that these concerns of the Union of Comoros will be comforted.

The Union of Comoros expresses its sincere pleasure to be part of this promising journey towards the creation of an Indian Ocean Economy.

We look forward to a further constructive collaboration with IORA Members.

Thank you.

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

H.E. Dr. Ibrahim Rahimpour, Deputy Foreign Minister for Asia & Pacific Affairs at the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers meeting, Perth, Australia, 9 October 2014

Excellency, Honourable Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia  
Honourable Ministers  
Ladies and Gentlemen

I should express my gratitude to Your Excellency for the warm hospitality in charming city of Perth and for the arrangements of IORA Council of Ministers and its sideline events.

I should appreciate Ambassador Bhagirath for his dedicational efforts and his team as well.

Madam Chair, there is no doubt that the Indian Ocean Rim Association has enormous potential in all its priority areas. Looking ahead key components of the Association: a roadmap which include trade and investment facilitation, we firmly believe that a PTA, or a same.....customs, tariffs, regime for ..... to enhancement of overall economic integration among his host.

It is a welcoming sign that importance of the contribution of target sector in enhancement of economic and trade cooperation among IORA Member States has been overwhelmingly recognized.

In materializing a notion further, Iran is hosting a meeting of Presidents of IORA Member States Chambers of Commerce in Tehran in 2015, in order to consider possible establishment of business council of federation of chamber of commerce which would enhance our trade agenda at private sector segment.

The Association should work to build a common approach towards sharing resources and expertise over fisheries, maritime transport, marine research and disaster management. Agriculture, tourism and culture are areas for cooperation which need more attention.

We are happily hosting one fully functional prominent specialized agency of IOR which is the Regional Centre of Science and Technology Transfer in Tehran. We have done every effort to support the centre in its functions and research, in its mandate.

After successful effort to name change, we are ready to sign the revised Charter of IORA.

We thank Australia for coming with the initiatives on Search and Rescue including MOU which we welcome and support its notion as we will be having authority to join formally in the near future.

There are more rooms for our Association in international arena, special cooperation with United Nations and Intergovernmental bodies in the region and beyond. These .....first promote international recognition of the Association and secondly we .....based for ....engagement and to utilize deliberation and consultations in these bodies.

I should thank India for hosting the Indian Ocean Dialogue 2014 in Cochin and for the importance it attached to holding this conference. We believe that the Indian Ocean Dialogue could add theoretical value to the work of our Association.

Once again, I would like to extend our gratitude to the government of Australia for wonderful arrangements and in particular Your Excellency, the Minister of Foreign Affairs for chairing our deliberations for the last two years in a very professional and consensus, in making innovation manner.

I thank you for your attention.

KENYA

Talking Notes for use by Amb. Raychelle Omano, Cabinet secretary, Ministry of defence during the 14<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers Meeting, Perth, Australia 9<sup>th</sup> October 2014.

Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign affairs, Australia

Hon. Ministers

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. It gives me great pleasure to be here to participate at the 14<sup>th</sup> Indian Ocean Rim Association Council of Ministers Meeting on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Kenya. I wish to convey the apologies from the Cabinet Secretary, who would have wished to attend the meeting but could not due to other official engagements.
2. Let me begin by thanking the Government and the people of Australia for the warm welcome and hospitality provided to me and my delegation since our arrival in Perth. I wish to appreciate the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) secretariat for the excellent preparations that have made this forum a great success.
3. This meeting provides us with an ample opportunity to discuss and follow up on issues of common interest to our region. I celebrate the fact that despite our diversity, we share an inextricable bond and common vision of a stable, secure and prosperous Indian Ocean region which we are discussing today.
4. I take this opportunity to recognize the presence of our Dialogue Partners and appreciate their support particularly in crucial areas such as financial support, technology transfer and training and capacity building. Their efforts immensely complement national and regional efforts of these three enablers.

Ladies and Gentlemen

5. The establishment of the Indian Ocean Rim Associations envisioned the strengthening of economic co-operation towards the sustained growth and development of its member States. It is therefore satisfying to note that significant momentum has been maintained in order to leverage on our common bond and commitment for the prosperity and sustainable economic growth of our region.
6. I wish to acknowledge the commendable achievements under the Chairmanship of Australia since we last met in Perth in 2013. Among them the Conference on the Political Economy of Maritime Africa in the Indian Ocean Region held in Nairobi, the first ever IORA Renewable Energy Ministerial Meeting held in Abu Dhabi, and the Women's Economic Empowerment engagements held in Kuala Lumpur and Hyderabad.

7. Kenya supports the recommendations from the Women's Economic Forum in Kuala Lumpur. In particular, it is our firm belief that investing in women's education, professional development and training is the entry point to empowering women to participate more effectively in the socio-economic and political arena. In addition, the implementation of gender responsive framework and budgets in the work of the association would go a long way in enhancing full inclusion in the region's activities.
8. On the important issue of energy as an important infrastructure component, Kenya fully supports a national and regional approach to addressing energy needs. The development aspirations for our region places growing demand for energy. As we seek to increase energy production levels, we need to take into consideration global concerns such as climate change, as well as environmental and energy security. Renewable energy thus represents a strategic aspect of national and regional cooperation and trade.
9. We believe that the implementation of these landmark outcomes will augment and complement the work of the IORA towards strengthening socio-economic and environmental priorities which are the three pillars for sustainable development. It is our view that these three pillars should be integrated and implemented in a balanced.
10. On maritime safety and security, Kenya fully supports the UN resolution 2125. Piracy continues to pose a threat to the maritime and fisheries activities and international trade by increasing the cost of doing business. As a transnational issue, we maintain that the menace should be fought through combined international efforts and using a multi-dimensional approach focusing on prevention, deterrence and security. We appreciate and support the efforts to deepen cooperation in the coordination of search and rescue operations through the proposed Memorandum of Understanding.

Ladies and Gentlemen

11. As we are aware, trade and investment is at the core of our cooperation. It is thus imperative that we promote and enhance business interaction among business community of the region through exhibitions and exchange of visits. I, therefore, appreciate Australia's incorporation of the Business Week in our programme of work. I believe that this will provide the beginning of further relations amongst the business fraternity.
12. I contend that we must continue to support each other in boosting intra-regional (IORA) trade while at the same time ensuring that our countries move up the economic value chain, creating sustainable economies and development, attracting intra-regional and foreign investment.
13. I, however, note that intra-regional trade continues to face a number of challenges such as poor infrastructure, connectivity, market complexities and weak trade facilitation including inefficiency at our ports. I, therefore, call upon member states to harmonize trade practices in line with international norms and minimize trade barriers, in order to maximize on the benefits from cooperation and partnerships between our Member States .
14. Secondly, in order for us to achieve this noble objectives, we need to address infrastructural development, without which most of our countries would not be globally competitive. As a

region, we need to focus on dedicated financing solutions in order to transform the regional in such critical areas as trade and investments.

Ladies and Gentlemen

15. I am pleased to note the increased engagement and discussions on cooperation and enhancement of the Blue economy for the region. As with each regions, seas and oceans have great potential for innovation and growth creation of jobs. We, therefore need to jointly devise strategies in order to tap on the innumerable opportunities that exist in coastal tourism, aquaculture, biotechnology and ocean energy among others. We may wish to consider this as a priority area for cooperation with our Dialogue partners.
16. In the area of Fisheries, Kenya committed to regional collaboration in harnessing the benefits within fisheries capture and aquaculture sector in an effort to realize the opportunities the blue economy promises. The sector approach to food security, unemployment and poverty eradication is paramount and should take into consideration resources sustainability and other global concerns such as environmental conservation and pollution. Kenya is further committed to fighting illegal unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing to protect fisheries resources.
17. As I conclude, I wish to reiterate that education and training in science, technology and innovation are essential ingredients in the industrialization and rapid socio-economy growth and sustainable development of economies. Investing in research in science, technology and innovation will help to improve the systems involved in the modern world especially in the marine environment through providing the requisite technologies and manpower required for efficient and sustainable use of water resources. We, therefore, support the establishment of Centres of Excellence in education and training which will be very instrumental in ensuring efficient, effective, and safe use of Indian Ocean water for sustainable exploitation and development.
18. Finally, let me reaffirm the commitment of the Government of the Republic of Kenya, to continue working closely with all member states of the IORA and its international partners towards the achievement of our goals.
19. Thank you

Cabinet Secretary for Defence  
October 2014

MALAYSIA

The 14th Meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers (COM)  
Perth, Australia  
9 October 2014

Statement by the Hon. Dato' Hamzah Zainudin,  
Deputy Foreign Minister of Malaysia

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The Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Australia  
H.E Amb. K.V Baghirath, Secretary General of IORA  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, I wish to join other colleagues in expressing my sincere gratitude to you, Excellency and the Australian Government for the warm reception and kind hospitality extended to me and members of my delegation, and for the excellent arrangements for the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers. I also wish to thank the Secretariat for all their hard work in preparation for this meeting.

2. My delegation wishes to commend you, Madam Chair, for your leadership of IORA and for your efforts in the pursuit of our common interests for the mutual benefit of IORA members.

3. On behalf of the people and the Government of Malaysia, I would also like to take this opportunity to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to IORA members for the assistance and cooperation that were extended to Malaysia in the relentless search for the missing Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. I would also like to thank IORA members for the expressions of support and sympathy over the tragic incident of the downing of MH17.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

4. After 18 years, IORA has evolved from a regional grouping, established to intensify economic cooperation, to a dynamic grouping that promotes sustainable growth and balanced development in the Indian Ocean region. Despite its diverse membership, Malaysia is pleased to note the progress achieved in the context of forging partnerships among its members, in areas of mutual interest. Discussions within IORA have now expanded to encompass issues as embodied in IORA's priority areas ranging from maritime security and safety, trade and investment facilitation, to progressive issues such as gender empowerment, to better address trans-oceanic challenges. Malaysia welcomes this progress and reiterate our commitment towards enhancing regional economic integration.

5. In this context, we appreciate the opportunity at this meeting to interact with the business community and to hear of their plans for greater economic cooperation with the member countries of IORA. We are also supportive of the proposed matrix by the Chair and we suggest that member



countries to immediately respond and send our own data and analysis to the Secretariat since such information and transparency are of paramount importance to the business community.

6. Malaysia is honoured to have been chosen as the venue of IORA's first gender empowerment event in Kuala Lumpur on 17 -19 August 2014. More than 100 participants, both local and foreign, from the textile and tourism sectors, academia, government and business sectors participated in the event. I am pleased to report that six (6) priority areas have been identified to promote economic empowerment of women, which forms half of the world's population which are:

- i. Invest in women's education, professional development and training;
- ii. Promote national cultural identity—self, product and place—in a way that encompasses the strengths and contribution of women;
- iii. Contribute to broader understanding of women living in IORA countries by funding research and analysis to develop policy decisions and measure progress in order to achieve gender equality;
- iv. Implement gender responsive policy frameworks and budgets;
- v. Develop an IORA framework for responsible tourism to advance women's economic empowerment; and
- vi. Take a whole-of-community approach to the women's economic empowerment, acknowledging the complex interaction of gender roles, responsibilities and norms.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

7. As the incoming Chair of ASEAN and with the establishment of the ASEAN Community in 2015, Malaysia stands ready to further explore possible collaboration between ASEAN and IORA in areas of mutual interest.

8. Malaysia welcomes the proposed review of the IORA Charter and supports the increase in the members' annual contribution to IORA from USD16,500 to USD24,000, which we feel is needed to cover the deficit in IORA's current account. The proposed MOU on Search and Rescue cooperation in the Indian Ocean region is a good initiative but nonetheless Malaysia would require more time to study it thoroughly to ensure that our interest is taken into account and that it is beneficial to all member states .

9. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate Malaysia's commitment to work closely with IORA Member States towards the realization of our shared objective - the prosperity of the Indian Ocean region. I am confident that our deliberations in this meeting will further contribute to the success of our organization.

Thank you.

MAURITIUS

Statement by Mrs Usha Dwarka-Canabady, Ag. Secretary for Foreign Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Regional Integration and International Trade, Republic of Mauritius

Agenda Item – General Debate-Statements by Ministers at the 14<sup>th</sup> IORA Council of Ministers  
Meeting, Perth, Australia, 9 October 2014

Ms. Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs  
Honourable Ministers  
Excellencies  
Secretary-General

Let me express my thanks first to you Chair, to the government of Australia and the authorities of Western Australia as well as to the people of Perth and not least the staff of your Ministry for their warm hospitable welcome and efficient realization of our meetings.

As we meet today, we know that we will be celebrating 20 years anniversary in a few years' time, I believe IORA is now at a turning point.

In these past few years, I recognize that we have been more dynamic. There has been a renewed interest and confidence in IORA and on what IORA could possibly deliver on.

My delegation would like to underscore the innovative actions of India and Australia in particular, which in addition to the contributions of previous Chairs, have been instrumental in the development of this new dynamism, along with a very diplomatic but very proactive approach of the Secretary-General and his team. We are pleased that we will have him with us for some time more.

By our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Chair, we would have a new appellation as proposed by you Yourself. We would have a new Charter and we trust that we might have an anthem to coincide with the anniversary as has been proposed by Mauritius.

However, this is not enough to our mind. We need concrete outcomes and we need these concrete outcomes around common projects.

And listening to the discussions of the Senior Officials these past two days, listening to the statements made this morning, recording the Perth Declaration on the Principles for Peaceful Productive and Sustainable Use of the Indian Ocean and its resources, recording also the very successful holding of the Indian Ocean Dialogue in Cochin in September and the next chapter of this Dialogue to be held in Australia, I think it is clear to us that the ocean is the concrete project that we have to work on.

Blue growth, Chair, to me, to my mind calls promise for all our countries, for all the countries of the rim. I would therefore like to suggest that the Secretariat be given the responsibility to identify certain key ocean related issues around which core groups of IORA countries may focus, with a view to come up with specific recommendations on how we can individually and collectively advance the ocean economy or the blue economy as it is often referred to.

Mauritius, Chair, has already circulated a concept note on the establishment on an ocean observatory for the Indian Ocean. We have also at the level of the United Nations proposed a global ocean strategy and I understand that a certain number of consultations are currently proceeding on this.

We have also offered at the level of Senior Officials, to host the first IORA conference on the ocean economy next year. And we believe that the setting up of this focused Group could lead us to receiving recommendations at such a conference to be able to know how we proceed further on developing the ocean economy.

We will also welcome a business group to reflect on ocean issues and academic group to reflect on ocean issues and, if possible, cross-cuttingly women to try and identify women's group that would try to identify simple manners, simple ways in which women can be empowered to the ocean economy, if possible, Chair.

Let me also suggest, Chair, finally that as we are starting thinking of new things, let us also give some thoughts to the consolidation of our membership and the consolidation of the Secretariat so that they can deliver on the agenda we have set up.

Thank you.



## REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE

### MINISTÉRIO DOS NEGÓCIOS ESTRANGEIROS E COOPERAÇÃO DIRECÇÃO PARA AS ORGANIZAÇÕES INTERNACIONAIS E CONFERÊNCIAS

Proposal

*Statement by*

*His Excellency Belmiro Malate, Ambassador of the Republic of Mozambique in Japan and Australia at the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Perth Australia, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2014*

Your Excellency Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia

Distinguished Heads of Delegations

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of His Excellency Oldemiro Baloi, Minister of the Republic of Mozambique, allow me to congratulate you, Madame Chair, for hosting this important Ministerial Meeting that takes place in this beautiful city of Perth, and to extend through you our greetings to the People and Government of Australia for hospitality afforded to us.

The Minister Baloi would like to attend personally this Meeting but due to national agenda overlap did not allow him to be here today. Therefore, he addresses a successful meeting, whose deliberations, certainly will contribute to strengthen cooperation among member States in the benefit of the IORA countries.

We also salute the Secretary General of IORA for his commitment to promoting our common interests in regional cooperation.

**Excellencies,**

The theme of this Session, "The Blue Economy", is transversal, not only for its amplitude but also for bringing challenges that fasten us to continuous strengthening the cooperation, as well as addressing complex development challenges. It brings also the need of the solidarity to the most vulnerable

countries to be able to carry out its policies for development in efforts to combat poverty, piracy and international terrorism in the Indian Ocean.

As common region, we have a potential to be exploited in various areas of the common interests.

For us, IORA must play important role in defining the Post-2015 Agenda in order to create the conditions for the economic development through promoting sustainable development in region.

The main challenges of the Post-2015 Development Agenda are related to ensuring the acceleration of development in the IORA States, particularly in those most vulnerable.

By other side, the IORA's efforts and international community in general aimed at achieving development agenda, can be constrained by prevailing conflicts, jeopardizing international peace and security.

### **Excellencies,**

Development that we desire in our region requires peace and stability, as pre-conditions for a more strong cooperation.

In this context, Mozambique would like to commend efforts that IORA has developing by scheduling the matter maritime security in the ministerial meetings. The piracy is continuing to be one of the major challenges in the Indian Ocean region. It undermines efforts that countries undertake by diverting financial and human resources necessary to accomplish development agenda, particularly against hunger and poverty.

The human beings trafficking, trans maritime organized crime and piracy have direct impact on economic development and on improving the living conditions of the people.

In this context, Mozambique reiterates the importance of peace and stability in order to achieve the development agenda.

### **Excellencies,**

In concluding my remarks, I would like to commend the relevance of IORA in dealing with this important issue of the Blue Economy, especially for its potential to bring a balanced development in our region, what demonstrates the commitment of our States to fight poverty and promote development through cooperation.

Thank You for attention!

Perth, 9 October 2014

SULTANATE OF OMAN

Statement By:

His Excellency Yahya Abdullah Al-Arimi

Chief of the Economic Sector

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sultanate of Oman

At

The Council of Ministers Meeting

Of the IORA

9 October 2014

Madam Chair,

Allow me at the outset to thank the government of Australia for hosting these significant events and for the excellent arrangement and warm hospitality given to our delegation since our arrival.

You are all aware that Sultanate of Oman was one of the founding members of the Indian Ocean Rim Association with a hope that the new organization would play an important role in enhancing the economic, trade and scientific cooperation between the Member States, and we are still looking into the same goals. And we believe that we can achieve the goals of our Association through more integration and interaction and cooperation between the Member States.

Madam Chair,

I would like to brief the distinguished participants on the four projects that we are taking care of:

1. Fisheries Support Unit
  2. Tourism Resource Centre
  3. Maritime Transport Council
  4. Shipping Transport Company
- ❖ Fisheries Support Unit is one of the flagship projects of the IORA. It plays an important role in enhancing cooperation within the fisheries sector of IORA. The headquarters of the Unit is based in Sultanate of Oman as approved in the Council's meeting in Sana'a, Yemen in 2009.
  - ❖ Tourism Resource Centre, the Sultanate of Oman proposed to establish a Tourism Resource Centre (TRC) during the second CSO meeting held. The Centre would serve as a specialized tourism resources library for IORA Member States. We have already completed phase one of the study which covered 8 countries of the Member States and we have now entered into the second stage which would include the other 11 members of IORA. However, India is very large in size, it is agreed to include it in a separate phase. We are heading with the study and hope to complete it very soon.
  - ❖ Maritime Transport Council, the main objective of the Council is to serve as a platform for networking and coordination among Member States. It would also help in enhancing cooperation on maritime related issues. The project is in the final stages and I hope that we can complete it within this year or beginning of next year.
  - ❖ During the Council of Ministers' meeting held in India, 2012, the Sultanate of Oman granted US\$ 100,000 to improve the capacities and facilities currently available in the ports of the Member States. However, it was agreed with the Secretary-General, IORA to change the scope of the study and we will come up with something specific.

In closing, I would like again to express my deep thanks and appreciation for the government and people of Australia to hosting this meeting and for the excellent arrangement for the meeting.

Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

SEYCHELLES

INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION  
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, PERTH, AUSTRALIA  
9<sup>th</sup>OCTOBER, 2014

OPENING STATEMENT FOR H.E JEAN PAUL ADAM, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS,  
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES

H.E. Ms. Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia and Chair of IORA,  
H.E Mr. Marti Natalegawa, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia and co-chair of IORA,  
Secretary General of IORA,  
Ministers, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

We thank you Madam Chair, for having convened this meeting in Perth, Australia's gateway to the Indian Ocean. We also thank the government and people of Australia for their strategic commitment to this Indian Ocean space- a space which continues to gain geo-strategic importance, and economic relevance, as emphasised by the engagement of the region's business community.

We also welcome the membership requests from the 3 countries that have expressed the desire to join; Maldives, Myanmar and Somalia.

As we start this meeting, allow me to re-state our solidarity with the government and people of Malaysia related to the disappearance of MH370. This tragic incident, and the coordinated efforts of all our states to recover the missing plane, have illustrated the importance of renewed commitments towards defining the Indian ocean as a zone of partnership, peace and development.

Madam Chair,

The fact that we have placed the Blue Economy at the heart of the agenda of this meeting, recognises the importance that we all place on our ocean as a catalyst for our future development.

A coordinated and inclusive approach towards better harnessing our ocean's wealth and resources will yield shared benefits for all. To fully implement the Blue Economy, Seychelles has highlighted the importance of a deeper commitment to oceanic research, better marine spatial planning and more effective and judicious management of marine protected areas.

We must also not forget the 'economy' within the 'Blue Economy'. We must empower and facilitate the contribution of the private sector to these efforts.

Seychelles was pleased to organise a first Blue Economy Summit in partnership with the United Arab Emirates as part of the annual sustainability week held in Abu Dhabi every January at the beginning of



this year. We are pleased that this meeting will now become an annual event and we very much look forward to receive representatives from IORA countries once again in January 2015 in Abu Dhabi.

One of the principal recommendations of this first meeting was that more emphasis must be placed on research relating to the sustainable management of our oceans. We have only a fraction of the data required for our countries to make informed decisions that have an impact not only on our own populations, but far beyond our borders.

We welcome Australia's engagement towards research as illustrated through the development of the Indian Ocean Research Centre. We also welcome the initiatives of many of our members towards emphasising research into the Blue Economy including Bangladesh, India, Mauritius, Sri Lanka, South Africa and the UAE among others.

It is essential that the results of ground breaking research are also shared as widely, and as inclusively as possible. A core recommendation from the recently concluded Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Samoa, is to facilitate access by SIDS to appropriate information and research. Islands are the custodians of large tracts of oceans, but have the least resources to effectively manage these spaces.

We firmly believe that IORA is the ideal framework through which to facilitate the sharing of best practices and research relating to ocean management and governance in the Indian ocean.

The importance of careful and coordinated improvements in terms of marine spatial planning and marine protection cannot be over-emphasised. We need to develop regional tools to help us share best practices. Seychelles has already been actively engaged in launching the Western Indian Ocean Challenge- an initiative to better protect sensitive areas in our region, promote climate change resilience as well as build viable eco-tourism opportunities. We are very encouraged by the engagement of many regional partners, which in addition to the Indian Ocean island states includes Kenya and Tanzania.

We believe that we can further strengthen our understanding and implementation of marine protected areas by also learning from the many innovations being undertaken in our region and we hope to build such partnerships with the support of IORA.

Better marine spacial planning alongside improved protection also offers opportunities for sustainable development of our fisheries, where again, IORA is already playing a key role to facilitate exchange of information and regional partnerships.

Madam Chair,

We are painfully aware that the Blue Economy cannot be developed if we do not also strengthen our collective security related to our maritime spaces. Seychelles has launched a regional intelligence coordination centre to better share information relating not only to piracy- but to also counter the rising threats of drug trafficking, arms trafficking, people trafficking, illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing and the threat of terrorism. We hope to be able to build a strong regional network of maritime security centres that are empowered to share information in real time. We are conscious that we all have different national laws regulating security matters- but where possible let us build practical informal

information sharing network, which can provide for a more formal networks in the long term. We welcome the proposal to build a partnership with UNODC to facilitate the creation of this type of regional network.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Tourism is also at heart of our Indian Ocean Rim Association. While it contributes substantially to the GDP of our region- it offers us the potential to bring even more. Seychelles is proud to host The Indian Ocean Rim meeting of Tourism Ministers and Tourism Mart from the 20th to the 21st November and I call on all members to participate actively in building this shared opportunity.

Madam Chair,

Seychelles welcomes your initiative to address the empowerment of women and girls as a cross cutting issue within our Association. These efforts to create empowerment can also be situated within our efforts to strengthen the trade and economic partnerships in our region. Seychelles would like to reiterate its support for the facilitation of a network which brings together SMEs from across our region, particularly those that are led by women and which bring a positive impact to the empowerment of women and girls. In a small country such as Seychelles, we are very conscious that opportunities for economic transformation are always linked to economic transformations that also occur elsewhere. Let us do more to support links between SMEs across our ocean. Let us also get banks and micro-finance institutions across our region to partner with SMEs to create new opportunities for every scale of business.

Finally Madam Chair,

Allow me to reiterate our profound conviction that the Indian Ocean Rim Association is the ideal vehicle to bring about the Blue Economy transformation that we are all committed to. If the last 100 years was very much about how we could maximise the use of our land, this century is very much about making the most of our ocean.

The Indian Ocean is at the crest of this wave, and with our leadership and commitment we can bring about this transformative change that we all believe in.

I thank you.

SINGAPORE

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR LAW AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS K SHANMUGAM AT THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING ON 9 OCTOBER 2014 AT THE CROWN METROPOL IN PERTH, AUSTRALIA**

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

First, let me thank Australia for its warm hospitality, Julie for hosting today's Council of Ministers' meeting, and Australia for its chairmanship of IORA from 2013 to this year.

2 I would like to commend IORA's progress under Australia and the fact that we held focused policy discussions on the six priority areas decided on in 2012. Those discussions on the six areas provided a clear, common path forward for IORA members, notwithstanding our diversity.

3 We truly welcome the new focus on empowering women. Studies in many countries have shown that, if we empower women, we make measurable improvement in the general society as a whole. Singapore took part in the "Women's Empowerment and Poverty Alleviation Workshop" in Hyderabad last month.

4 We also support the signing of the "MOU for the Coordination and Cooperation of Search and Rescue Services in the Indian Ocean Region".

5 Australia has set a high bar. Indonesia, as the next Chair, will lead IORA through the challenges ahead of us and I hope that we will continue to make progress.

6 As IORA moves forward, I would make three points that I suggest we keep in mind. First, the concept of "community". We are all members of a community linked by our ties to the Indian Ocean. IORA has tremendous potential. There is a lot for us to do.

7 Australia has shown strong commitment in this regard with its initiatives. I hope that we can learn from Australia's focused approach as Chair and each of us can work together to give meaning to this forum. We prosper as each individual member grows. It is in our common interest to pursue mutually-beneficial cooperation.

8 The second concept I would like to raise is "creativity". The diversity of our member states means that there are always new ideas being generated as we move forward. Member states have been active in hosting new and varied workshops and events. The Blue Economy is one such example.

9 Internationally, there has been no real headway that has been made to define what the Blue Economy is. IORA can take the lead as one of the first multilateral organisations to do so and lay

down a clear framework to guide further work in this area. We need to actively consider how we can move on from here.

10                   The third point I want to make is “consolidation”. Over the years, we have had many useful initiatives and projects. I think it is useful for us to take stock, consolidate and deepen our existing initiatives, and see how they can complement each other.

11                   Apart from these three concepts, as we progress together as an organisation, it is important that we continue to be guided by international law. International law, like UNCLOS, provides the legal framework necessary for us to undertake our collaboration. It is useful to also partner other international organisations, and build upon their existing efforts where we share common objectives.

12                   In the context of the ideas that have been put forward, Singapore is happy to create a series of capacity building programmes for us to share experiences in public policy making, including in Blue Economy areas. We can discuss this in a little more detail during the lunch later. Thank you.

SOUTH AFRICA

**OPENING STATEMENT BY MS NOMAINDIYA MFEKETO, DEPUTY MINISTER OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION, AT THE 14TH MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS OF IORA, PERTH, AUSTRALIA, 09 OCTOBER 2014**

Chairperson,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is my pleasure to represent South Africa at this 14th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA). Minister Nkoana-Mashabane requested that I convey her regret in not being able to attend today's meeting, but asked that I kindly convey her warmest wishes to Your Excellencies representing IORA Member States present here today.

On behalf of my delegation, may I also thank the Government of Australia once again for its hospitality and excellent arrangements for the hosting of this meeting. The week long program preceding this COM, I am informed, has been very vibrant and comprehensive.

Excellencies,

As the apex organization of the Indian Ocean, IORA's strategic salience continues to grow from strength to strength. The growing number of countries wishing to join IORA, the rising profile of the engagement with Dialogue Partners, the keen interest to serve as Chair among the members, as well as the focused Agenda encapsulated in the six Priorities, all together attest to the rising profile of IORA. South Africa is keen to continue to work with the Chair and Vice-Chair, as well as the other Member States of the IORA in our attempt to contribute towards the new dynamism this organization is currently experiencing. Furthermore, South Africa commends the work of the Secretariat and the Chair, in so far as the integration and mainstreaming of Gender into all six policy areas of IORA. This will go a long way towards ensuring that the upliftment of women in this region becomes part and parcel of IORA's success. South Africa has a robust women empowerment targets, with the target of achieving 50% of representation of empowered women across all segments of economic activity.

Institutions that we established for advancing women's empowerment and gender equality include the Gender Commission on Equality, which has a constitutional mandate to promote respect for gender equality and ensure the attainment of gender equality. We also have a Women and Children's Ministry in Government, as well as Gender and Women Empowerment unit within the Department of Trade and Industry, all designed especially to protect, promote and enhance the rights of citizens, with the expectation to particularly assist women to vindicate their rights, promote development and improve the quality of life generally. IORA's mainstreaming of Gender thus fits aptly with our drive towards the empowerment of women.

In assessing what we have been able to do together, it is quite acceptable to continue make some adjustments where necessary and to also reflect on the various present and emerging challenges that we face.

In this regard, the continued deepening and elevation of our engagement with Dialogue Partners is an area in need of continuous effort on our part, as we work towards concrete outcomes from our relationship with the Dialogue Partners.

While tangible progress sometimes appears to be slow, we must remain mindful that the changing geopolitical and natural environment of the past seventeen years has launched the Indian Ocean Region closer to the prominent position it held a few centuries ago.

We therefore need to collaborate more closely with each other and with our international partners like the African Union particularly in the context of the African Integrated Maritime Strategy, the Gulf Cooperation Council, ASEAN, as well as the United Nations in achieving our objectives. We cannot function in isolation and must therefore continue to seek further avenues for cooperation with each other. I am therefore pleased with the work done by Secretary-General Bhagirath in seeking avenues of engagement with these groupings.

Excellencies,

We continue to experience major changes internationally at all levels, with geo-political challenges, conflict and threats to peace and security, as well as a protracted worldwide financial crisis and a shaky economic outlook. However there is also a paradigm shift in the balance of global economic power with the emergence of new global players and drivers of change. This has major geo-strategic and geo-political implications that IORA must consider, as we path a way forward.

In spite of the great disparity in the levels of development of our countries, we need to map out a vision of economic cooperation to enhance trade and investment. The theme of the Blue Economy for our Ministerial Retreat, selected by our host, resonates well with the cross-cutting feature and promise that IORA holds, for us, as states which can optimize the Ocean Economy's potential. I will share South Africa's strategy in this regard with you at the retreat dear colleagues, as we exchange views.

Excellencies,

At the 2013 Council of Ministers here in Perth, South Africa expressed interest in serving as IORA Chair. We are grateful for the support of each member towards this endeavor as we receive the official confirmation of this decision at this COM.

Excellencies, may I thank the Government of Australia for its dedication and leadership of IORA during its Chairship. The legacy of mainstreaming of Gender into IORA as well as the efforts towards business to business interaction among IORA countries will indeed leave an indelible legacy upon which we can build this dynamic Association.

I thank you.

ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND COOPERATION

SRI LANKA

**Statement by Hon. Prof. G.L Peiris, Minister of External Affairs of Sri Lanka at the IORA Council of Ministers Meeting, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2014, Perth, Australia**

Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Australia and Chair of IORA  
His Excellency K.V Bhagirath, Secretary General of IORA  
Excellences, ladies and gentlemen

It is indeed a great pleasure to be back in this beautiful city of Perth, one year since we last met, to once more renew our commitment to the Indian Ocean Rim Association and take decisive steps towards further regional integration and cooperation. At the very outset I wish to thank our hosts, the Foreign Minister and the Federal Government of Australia and the Prime Minister and the State Government of Western Australia for their gracious hospitality and the excellent arrangements made for this meeting.

The able and farsighted leadership of Hon. Julie Bishop has opened many avenues of cooperation within IORA in the past year. The organization has not only changed its name and logo since the last meeting but has also morphed into a cohesive grouping that is finally realizing the true potential of regional cooperation spanning the vast Indian Ocean littoral. We are indeed a unique organization, encompassing nations across three continents, connecting over two and a half billion people and offering many opportunities for collaboration across numerous spheres of shared interest. The potential of our group is boundless and it is of immense satisfaction that we are making considerable strides towards achieving the original goals set in 1997 at the inception of IOR-ARC.

Madam Chair,

My delegation wishes to wholeheartedly endorse your vision to focus on enhancing cooperation in the economic sphere and for your particular emphasis on the 'Blue Economy.' The business week organized concurrent to these meetings has brought together many leaders of the corporate sector and I am certain this will create a conducive environment for future collaboration that would yield tangible benefits to all our peoples. As nations that share the resource filled Indian Ocean it is in all our collective interests to utilize these resources in the most sustainable, fair and efficient manner.

Sustainable use of ocean resources and unshackling the constraints for the realization of the true potential of a Blue Economy have been endorsed by the Government of His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, the President of Sri Lanka. One of the fundamental pillars of the five hub policy of the Sri Lankan Government has been the transformation of our country into a maritime logistics hub. The geographical location of the country at the centre of the Indian Ocean straddling the main East-West shipping lane makes us an ideal location to be a gateway not only to the Indian sub-continent but to the whole Indian Ocean region.

In 2013, the Government created a legal framework to develop free ports and bonding facilities to build a Logistic Services Economy. This initiative has been supported by the newly built deep water port in Hambantota and by the expansion of the Colombo Port. The latter is now firmly established as the

largest container port in South Asia and a gateway to the vast Indian subcontinent. The logistics industry and provision of services have made Sri Lanka an attractive destination to setup operations for numerous commercial ventures. With these developments new aspirations of a Marine Economy is emerging and Sri Lanka looks forward to share experiences, build nexuses and enhance mutually beneficial cooperation with the greater Indian Ocean region. Priorities in the country's economic policy reflect a timely focus on conservation and management of ocean resources, the use of these resources in a systematic way over a continuing timeframe, with special emphasis on the environment, and having recourse to the blue economy as a fillip to leisure activities important for the development of tourism.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we seek to unleash the possibilities of a Blue Economy it is imperative that the necessary economic, scientific and social considerations be duly analysed and informed policy decisions be made to ensure the sustainable and equitable use of the Indian Ocean. Research therefore is a pivotal necessity in this endeavour. It is in this context that Sri Lanka wishes to be an active participant in the transformation we envision for the Indian Ocean region and for IORA in particular. You may recall that last year at this forum I reiterated my Government's commitment to establish a Centre of Excellence in Ocean Sciences and Environment. I now have the pleasure to report to you that within the course of the year we have been able to finalize the domestic prerequisites and modalities to establish this important institution. In addition the feasibility of this IORA project was assessed at a workshop hosted by Sri Lanka in July which was attended by experts representing nearly all our members. At this meeting the Government of Sri Lanka once again pledged to fund the Centre for the initial five years and an inclusive governance structure has been proposed that would allow significant space for all IORA member countries to contribute and be active participants of this institute.

This Council called on Member States to establish Centres of Excellence as far back in 2008 and Sri Lanka first proposed the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in Ocean Sciences and Environment in 2010. Time is now opportune to operationalize this important IORA institution and I seek the Council's endorsement to formally establish the Centre in Sri Lanka in the near future.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In building a Blue Economy the maritime security of the Indian Ocean is a vital prerequisite. The common threat of maritime piracy poses a considerable challenge to IORA's objectives. Conscious of this reality Sri Lanka has been an integral player in counter-piracy efforts in the Indian Ocean. As a country that was plagued by terrorism for nearly three decades and as a victim of illegal trafficking of weapons which in turn was funded by illicit trafficking of narcotics and humans, we are committed to the security of the Indian Ocean. It is in all our collective interests to share information, resources and build capacity to achieve this goal. At this point I wish to convey my appreciation to the Government of Australia for the assistance offered to Sri Lanka to curb illegal human trafficking which has become a menace to the whole region.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to particularly commend the efforts of our Chair to focus the attention of IORA towards empowerment of women. In Sri Lanka women play a critical role in the economy and are the backbone of several important sectors. We take pride in the parity that has been achieved between the genders in the fields of education, health and labour. In Sri Lanka the Government has implemented proactive policies that ensure women are equal and active partners in all spheres of political, economic and social



activities. Noting that the members of our organisation are at different levels of development, it would be useful to share experiences and grant greater opportunities for women in our region to be custodians of their own destiny. The challenge facing all of us today is to ensure that female empowerment is at the vanguard of our efforts towards prosperity.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We need to prepare ourselves against the all too tragic consequences of natural disasters and other emergencies such as the disappearance of MH 370. While offering my condolences to my Malaysian colleague over the painful events that shocked the whole world, I wish to also appreciate the valiant efforts made by the Australian authorities in search of the missing airline. This tragic incident has demonstrated the necessity for closer cooperation and coordination in search and rescue operations in our region and in the necessity of coordinated utilisation of limited resources when faced with a similar contingency.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In May this year Sri Lanka hosted an IORA Workshop on Heritage Management for experts from our Member States. The participants noted that there is a necessity to ensure shared understanding of diverse systems and mechanisms that exist for the management of heritage properties and called on the IORA to provide a forum for the delegates of Member States to learn, exchange and discuss methods and best practices. A document titled "Colombo Recommendation on the Management of Heritage within IORA Member States" was proposed by the participants and I wish to call on my colleagues to consider adhering to these guidelines in their management of heritage properties which are assets of all humanity.

Madam Chair, ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion I wish to once again congratulate Hon. Julie Bishop and her able team for the excellent stewardship of IORA in the past year and wish her well for the year ahead as Australia continues as Chair. I must also specially mention the dynamic supporting role played by Hon. Marty Natalegawa, the Foreign Minister of Indonesia as the Vice Chair of IORA. The assistance provided by Ambassador K.V Bhagirath and the Secretariat for the advancement of the IORA agenda merits special appreciation.

I wish to reiterate Sri Lanka's commitment to IORA and pledge our fullest cooperation for the work ahead.

Thank you.

TANZANIA

Statement for Hon. Dr Mahadhi J.Maalim (MP) Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania with respect to the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers Perth – Australia, 9<sup>th</sup> October, 2014

Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign affairs of the Commonwealth Republic of Australia and Chair of the IORA;

Hon. Ministers and Heads of Delegations;

H.E. Ambassador K.V. Bhagirath, Secretary General of the IORA;

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates;  
Ladies and Gentlemen.

At the outset, allow me to heartily register apologies from Hon, Bernard K Membe (MP), Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the United Republic of Tanzania who could not make it to this important meeting. He would have wished to be here, but was not able due to other equally important commitments. He sends his wishes for fruitful deliberations.

Excellencies;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

As I join the Honorable Ministers and Colleagues from the Indian Ocean Rim in this October assembly of the 14<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers Meeting here in Perth, allow me to express our sincerer appreciation to the Government and the People of Australia for the excellent reception, friendship and hospitality that was extended to me and my delegation since our arrival in this beautiful city.

I wish also to convey our appreciation and gratitude to the IORA Secretariat for the excellent preparations that have made the convening of this meeting a success.

I further wish to wholeheartedly express my appreciation and congratulate the Government of Australia, Western Australia State Government.. The Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia for developing series of intuitive and interactive business events along with the 14<sup>th</sup> IORA Council of Minister Meeting. These events have definitely marked another milestone in strengthening and involvement of business community from our region and in our joint efforts to increase trade and investment ties as a route to deeper integration.

Excellencies;  
Ladies and Gentlemen;

One of the objectives of the IORA is to promote sustainable growth and balanced development of this region. To compliment this objective, Member States have been undertaking various projects for economic cooperation relating to trade facilitation, promotion of foreign investment, tourism , development of infrastructure, promotion of maritime transport and related matters. Promoting prosperity in the Indian Ocean is therefore an important aspect for the IORA Member States whom together, share diverse cultural values and different levels of economic development.

Ladies and Gentlemen;

The 14<sup>th</sup> council of Ministers Meeting in Perth is quite timely as it focuses on both: strengthening of business relations from around the Indian Ocean and increasing trade and investment across the region as a founding objective of the IORA and the private sector as an engine of growth.

In order to attain the requisite level of prosperity, one fact will always stand significant; and that is focusing on the role of the private sector as a driving force and an engine of sustainable growth and balanced development of the individual Member States and the region at large. The development of a strong and dynamic private sector forms a necessary condition for sustained poverty reduction and development.

Excellences;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

As we are observing and considering the 14<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council, we should also reflect on the fact that with stronger cooperation our economies could be transformed and advance nationally, converged regionally and become attractive globally. We must therefore continue to strengthen our cooperation and boost intra-IORA trade. As we move toward this goal, we need to press ahead with implementing initiatives such as the Preferential Trade Area.

Further, I see regional integration, as an important driver for enhancing competitiveness and also in assisting our countries to erect the needed capacities for self reliance and build resilience against the uncertainties presented by the current challenges facing regional and global economies, such as world financial crisis, and decline in world prices for our produce. Through regional integration intra-regional trade tends to increase, as it presents additional and alternative markets for goods and services.

Excellences;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

I would like to conclude by pointing out that, the United Republic of Tanzania has developed a Draft Concept Note on Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in collaboration with the IORA Secretariat. The Concept Note was discussed during the IORA Technical Workshop on Sustainable Aquaculture and Artisanal Fisheries Development and Management in the Indian Ocean which was held in Zanzibar from 11<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> August, 2014. It is important to remind that, the workshop was

THAILAND

*Check against delivery*

Statement by H.E. Mr. Don Pramudwinai  
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand  
14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers  
Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)  
9 October 2014  
Perth, Australia

Madame Chairperson,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,

I wish to thank Madame Chairperson and the Government of Australia for the excellent arrangements and warm hospitality extended to my delegation. I also wish to commend Australia for her outstanding leadership over the past year.

Excellencies,

We are only moments away from adopting a new IORA Charter.

A revitalized IORA is here. We need to build on this momentum.

IORA can play a key role in enhancing maritime security and commerce within the Indian Ocean, as well as with the Pacific.

First, we need to bolster maritime safety and security.

The incident of MH370 is a wake up call for IORA. It prompted us to identify a region-wide mechanism that can enhance our search and rescue cooperation to respond better to future tragedies. For this reason, we thank Australia for coming up with the Memorandum of Understanding on Search and Rescue Services in the Indian Ocean Region, which we hope to sign pending completion of internal procedures.

Thailand can contribute to this effort. We have facilities that can support rapid deployment in response to an HADR (Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief) emergency. We can also share our experience, having participated in and organized many HADR exercises – both bilaterally and multilaterally.

Security at sea also means safety from piracy and other transnational crimes.

Thailand is an active player in this field. We take part in the ASEAN Maritime Forum, ReCAAP (Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia), IMO (International Maritime Organization), the Malacca Straits Coordinated Patrols, the Eyes in the Sky air patrol and the Combat Group on Piracy off the Coast of Somalia.

Work on maritime safety and security requires strengthened cooperation and coordinated response. It is therefore important that IORA establish partnerships with other security forums such as the ASEAN Maritime Forum and ReCAAP for exchange of information and joint capacity building.

Second, we need to enhance connectivity to increase our intra-trade activities.

To do so, logistics costs need to be reduced and trade and transport infrastructure be improved.

We need to promote port development and port-to-port connectivity, including dry ports. Thailand is improving our port infrastructure on the west coast, including Ranong Port to extend our short sea shipping services to Yangon Port in Myanmar. We also plan to develop Pakbara Port which will be a new regional maritime gateway connecting the Indian Ocean with the Pacific Ocean via Songkhla Port. We are also working closely with Myanmar to develop the Dawei Deep Seaport which will serve as a dynamic route in the global supply chain linking the economic corridor from East Asia to Southeast Asia to South Asia and beyond.

Cost effective facilities are also needed to meet a rising demand for multimodal transport. In this regard, IORA may explore ASEAN's work on integrated and seamless multimodal transport as a model for IORA's maritime connectivity.

Greater business mobility should also be promoted. A business travel card is a viable option that should be seriously pursued.

Third, science and technology need further support – both technically and financially. Attention should be given to issues that have major impacts on the lives of our people, such as healthcare and medicine.

It is against this background that Thailand has invested in and promoted R&D on emerging infectious diseases. We have recently discovered an antibody for treatment of Ebola virus infection, and are now working with the World Health Organization to develop this prototype.

Within IORA, Thailand promoted the use and development of complementary and alternative medicine. A workshop was organized in Bangkok in July to exchange know-how and facilitate the commercialization of this traditional knowledge. Following the success of the Workshop, a business forum is now in the pipeline.

Member States that share our aspiration to improve Universal Health Coverage through alternative medicines are invited to join this effort.

**Excellencies,**

These are some of the challenges that IORA needs to address in order to leave its mark on the world stage.

In Thailand, we also have challenges of our own. The country is undergoing comprehensive reforms to move towards a full and sustainable democracy, and inclusive national development in all aspects.

We are making great strides on a path to fulfilling our Roadmap as planned and are now on the 2<sup>nd</sup> phase of the Roadmap to return the country to a full-fledged democracy.

Progress has also been made on the economic front to stimulate economic performance and ensure longer term competitiveness. To do so, all sectors are urged to work cohesively to build a positive atmosphere and regain the confidence of the international community.

We are pleased that our international partners have shown their continued interest to engage in economic activities with Thailand. We also appreciate our friends' understanding and support for our reform efforts and continued progress on the Roadmap.

On behalf of the Government and the people of Thailand, I thank all of you for standing with us. Your encouragement and support during this challenging period are highly valued, and so is the friendship that we share and will cherish.

Thank you for your kind attention.

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UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Statement by H.E. Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansoori  
Minister of Economic  
United Arab Emirates  
At the 14th meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM)  
IORA  
Perth Australia  
9th October, 2014

Your Excellency Madam Chair  
Excellences,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, first to begin by expressing on behalf of the United Arab Emirates delegation our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation and thanks to the Government of Australia for the warm hospitality and reception that have been extended to us since our arrival here in Perth. I am confident that with your wisdom and experience, and with the support and coordination of the member states, this meeting will successfully accomplish all its aims and goals that will enable us to strengthen and promote our Association. The Secretary – General and his team “the Secretariat” deserve our thanks and appreciation as well, for energizing the work of the Association.

We believe that, since our last meeting here in Perth, on 1st November last year, the work of the Association has witnessed a great deal of improvement. Nonetheless we need to exert more effort and attention to take our cooperation further ahead, whether it is in Maritime Safety and Security, Trade and Investment, Fisheries Management, Disaster Risk Reduction, Academia, or Tourism and Cultural Exchange. In addition, food, water and energy security which have a positive impact on our people's lives is a matter of every one concern. We need to show our will and determination to bring about tangible results.

Madam Chair,

The UAE as a peace loving nation is highly concerned with the World Community in maintaining peace and stability around the Globe, while Piracy is of a major threat to such aim. Maritime Safety and Security in the Indian Ocean Rim is of great importance to us. We would like to see more close cooperation and concerted action among member states for combating piracy and providing for solid legal and operational infrastructure to address this lethal threat.

UAE is still focus on this matter. For that we convened the Fourth International conference on combating piracy to be held on 29 – 30 October 2014 in Dubai, UAE. We will continue our efforts in this path. In this context helping Somalia to achieve a sustainable and successful political process is of a paramount importance.

The UAE will also host the World Expo 2020 at Dubai, under the theme: "Connecting Minds, Creating the Future". In doing so, UAE is presenting its experience in being a catalyst and facilitator for partnerships that remove barriers to sustainable economic development, and reach out for bridging geographical, cultural, and generational divides. Thanks to the member of our association and to our friends around the world for their support to make this come true.

Madam Chair,

Enhancing cultural exchange and tourism among member states would contribute to the most needed cultural understanding and tolerance. At the time when the world around us is witnessing rising cultural and religious tensions, it is high times to make use of our rich history of living together in peace and cooperation in a multi-cultural and multi religions societies on the rim of Indian Ocean.

I would like to finally stress that our Association since its inception in 1997 carried the vision to promote economic and trade cooperation and sustainable development among the member states. The vision is there and needs to be reality for all of us in order to achieve our noble goals.

Thank you, your Excellency.



**YEMEN**

**Statement by H.E. Ms. Noria Al-hamami  
Chief of Conferences and Organizations department  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs- Yemen  
14<sup>th</sup> Meeting on the Council of Ministers (COM)  
Perth – Australia – 9 October 2014**

**Your Excellency Madam Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

First of all, I would like to convey the regret of my minister and vice minister to attend such honorable meeting due to the current situation in Yemen.

**Madam Chair,**

I would like also to convey our thanks and gratitude to the Government of Australia for the warm hospitality and for the hosting the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers and related Meetings of the Indian Ocean Rim Association in this beautiful city of Perth, I would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Secretary General and the Secretariat of the Association for the excellent arrangement and preparations for this meeting.

Regarding the blue economy, Yemen is fully supporting such a document, which includes important aspects such as Maritime Safety and Security, combating terrorism and piracy, Youth problems, Women Empowerment and exchange of expertise between countries. All these fields form the challenges that Yemen is currently being face.

**Madam Chair,**

Yemen believe the NGOs , Youth, Women Empowerment are the main factors for sustainable development, in this regard Yemen supporting the Recommendations from the two meetings have been held in Kuala Lumpur and Hyderabad especially the Women Empowerment.

**Madam Chair,**

My government strongly supports the application from the Federal Republic of Somalia to join our Association and we are confident it will play a positive role in strengthening the Association and achieving its goals.

My government also supports the brotherly country United Arab Emirates to the position of Vice President of our association for the term 2017-2019, and if you allow me I would like to congratulate the Secretary General for the trust he gained from member states to obtain a new term as a Secretary General for our Association.

**Madam Chair,**

Finally, let me take this opportunity to reaffirm Yemen readiness to do whatever it can to strengthen the Association and to improve the level of its cooperation with the IORA, and to wish our honorable Council of Ministers every success for this meeting.

**I Thank You.**

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

**Remarks by Vice Foreign Minister Zhang Ming at  
the 14th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of  
the Indian Ocean Rim Association  
Perth, 9 October 2014**

The Hon. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia,  
Ambassador K.V. Bhagirath, Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to attend the 14th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) as representative of Foreign Minister Wang Yi. First, I would like to applaud Minister Bishop for her excellent work as Chair of the Council, and express heartfelt thanks to the Australian government and IORA secretariat for their preparations for the meeting and warm reception of the Chinese delegation.

The Indian Ocean Rim, covering Asia, Africa and Oceania, boasts vast land and seas areas, and abounds in natural and human resources. It is one of the most promising and dynamic regions in the world. In recent years, IORA has actively facilitated regional trade and investment liberalization, connectivity, development of marine resources and academic, scientific and technological exchanges, playing a positive role in upholding regional peace and stability and promoting regional development and prosperity.

I want to thank Minister Bishop and Secretary General Bhagirath for their comprehensive review of the work of IORA over the past year, and congratulate IORA on its new achievement in enhancing regional cooperation and self-development. We have also noted that IORA has attached even greater importance to dialogue and cooperation with its dialogue partners. We appreciate this.

Ladies and Gentlemen,  
China is a major maritime country with a long coastline of over 18,000 kilometers. Over the years, China has developed very close friendship and cooperation with IORA and its members.

China has attached high importance to actively participated in IORA affairs. Since becoming a dialogue partner in 2000, China has sent delegations to all the meetings of the Council of Ministers. The Chinese government has contributed a total of US\$300,000 to the Special fund for capacity building of IORA.

China has worked hard to strengthen economic and trade cooperation with IORA members. The trade volume between the two sides reached US \$ 726.156 billion in 2013, accounting for 17.45% of China's foreign trade. To the end of last year, China's investment to all the IORA member states topped 55 billion US dollars, marking an increase of 11.9 billion US dollars. China has established or is negotiating to establish free trade areas (FTA) with a number of IORA members. We are now under

intense FTA negotiation with Australia, the host country, and look forward to having good news at an early date.

China has taken an active part in cooperation for peace and security in the Indian Ocean region. China has stepped up coordination and cooperation with the rest of the international community and sent 18 naval escort fleets to the waters off the coast of Somalia to fight piracy and uphold safety and security of regional navigation routes. China has also actively participated in the good offices and mediation of regional hotspot issues and put forward China's proposals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a sincere partner of IORA, China stands ready to work together with its members and other dialogue partners to further advance the development of the organization and cooperation within the region and play an active role in upholding peace, stability, prosperity and development of the Indian Ocean Rim.

First, we will place even higher importance on dialogues within the IORA framework. This year, the Chinese government has sent a high-level delegation to the meeting of the Council of Ministers and many experts to the Business Forum and other thematic meetings, a testament to our commitment to and vigorous support for the endeavors of IORA. Early last month, China also sent a high-level delegation to the Indian Ocean Dialogue partners in Kochi, India.

Second, we will actively promote pragmatic cooperation. We have noted that the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) has reviewed and adopted the MOU on cooperation in seawater desalination and multipurpose utilization between Chinese institution and the IORA Regional Center for Science and Technology Transfer. We look forward to the review by the Council of Ministers, so that an agreement will be signed at an early date, which will be a new outcome of pragmatic cooperation between the two sides. China will continue to take an active part in regional peace and security affairs to fight piracy and terrorism.

Third, we will continue to support IORA capacity building. The Chinese government has decided to contribute another US\$ 100,000 to IORA for mutually agreed cooperation projects. And China will continue to provide human resources training for IORA secretariat.

Fourth, we will take part in the cooperation in the priority areas designated by IORA. China will continue to step up exchanges and cooperation with IORA and its members in such priority areas as trade and investment facilitation, navigation safety, maritime development, scientific and technological transfer and exchanges, food security, disaster prevention and reduction, environmental protection, human resources training and tourism.

In conclusion, I wish the meeting a complete success. Thank you.

EGYPT

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Delivered by H.E Dr Hassan El-Laithy Ambassador of the Arab Republic of Egypt to Australia

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IORA MINISTERIAL COUNCIL (PERTH OCTOBER 9, 2014)

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Your Excellency Madam Julie Bishop Federal Minister of Foreign Affairs & Chairperson of the Ministerial Council.

Your Excellency, Secretary General of the Council Ambassador Bhagirath.

Excellences and distinguished delegates.

It gives me great pleasure to be here with you representing Egypt and indeed my Foreign Minister His Excellency Mr. Sameh Shoukry. He would have wished to be here, and I have the honour of conveying his regards and best wishes for a successful outcome of this important conference.

We appreciate the hospitality shown by the Australian Government and as usual the well managed organization by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade under the leadership of the distinguished Minister, the honourable Julie Bishop.

Personally I have had previous experience of such wonderful hospitality, as I took part in a very successful visit to Western Australia and its delightful capital Perth attending a fulfilling and informative program for the diplomatic community in Australia under Minister Bishop's leadership.

Egypt places great importance on the work of the Indian Ocean Rim Association and the aims to be achieved by working together through different fora of the association including but not limited to the economic development fronts.

It's very opportune that this important meeting takes place in this time during which the whole world is uniting to confront the main joint challenge of terrorism and other IORA security issues.

Egypt is a country which has suffered a lot from terrorism in contemporary history, in particular, during the last couple of years since the Muslim Brotherhood has taken terrorism as the option against the will of the Egyptian people; counter to the roadmap to democracy and to serve an agenda against the strategic interests of Egypt and other countries in our region.

We appreciate the efforts and commitment of many countries at this conference, members as well as partners for their commitment to fight terrorism and to eradicate all of its roots.

Collective security within the IORA region is of vital importance. Having said that, I would like to reiterate Egypt's interests to further explore, continue cooperation and to follow

projects that could be developed from within IORA. In this vein, I would like to commend the discussions which have been held within private business discourse alongside the conference.

Although Egypt is not directly lying on the Indian Ocean, it's important to note that the link between the ocean and Europe through the Red Sea and the Suez Canal is vital for a binding global trade network. With this in mind, I'm very happy to share with you that the recently announced new Suez Canal project will provide an extra trade route parallel to the existing canal of 74 kilometers. This will allow the increase of the shipping capacity up to three times the current levels.

Besides the intended projects and ventures in fields of industrial, logistics and tourism, this project will be of added value for the whole of the IORA member states as well as partners as it will facilitate, enhance and hasten the time to expand into tertiary markets especially in the Mediterranean and European regions and beyond.

I'm sure that everyone present here today is aware that Egypt along with its brotherly & partner countries is preparing for an economic conference for investment opportunities to be held in February 2015 which will open the doors for greater cooperation within Egypt in different sectors including mining, agriculture, energy, fisheries, transport & logistics, tourism and education, to name just a few.

In this regard I have to emphasize the importance of the concept of the economy and its various applications within the private sector and for the empowerment of women.

Before I conclude I would like to refer to Egypt's roadmap to democracy which was introduced after the June 30<sup>th</sup> revolution which saw the end of the Muslim Brotherhood yearlong rule, has been successfully pursued. Egypt now has a new constitution, has run a successful presidential election bringing a democratically elected president with landslide victory and parliamentary elections will follow in the next few months. We have also seen structural reforms across different sectors. Egyptians are determined to have their country based on being democratic and modern, with civil rights, social justice and rule of law upheld.

Parallel to the democratic transformation, is the measurable strengthening of Egypt's economy with large scale investments underway, to give just one example is that of the investment of almost 8 billion US dollars injected into the new Suez Canal project over a period of just 8 days from local Egyptian investors.

Egypt is back on track: fulfilling its role within its region and internationally, hoping to see stability prevailing and peace reached between Israel and Palestine, and to have a viable Palestinian state within its borders according to international law and relevant security council resolutions.

And finally, regarding peace. I don't think anyone would disagree that achieving peace will help our endeavors in the war against terrorism and bringing it is our duty to work harder,

together in strengthening economic ties, providing more opportunities that will bring more prosperity and peace and security to the peoples not only of the region but also beyond. It is clear that there is an inter-correlation between collective security and stability to reach peace, and to achieve economic progress and social justice.

Madam Foreign Minister Julie Bishop and Chairperson, once again thank you for your leadership and successful presidency of Australia for this very important forum and finally, I wish Indonesia, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates a successful mission in her upcoming presidency of the forum for 2015.

End

FRANCE

**Indian Ocean Rim Association  
14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers  
Perth, October 9, 2014**

Ambassador Laurent Garnier  
Head of the French delegation

Madam Chair  
Excellencies, distinguished delegates

I would like to thank the Government of Australia for their invitation, their warm welcome and for the excellent organisation of this 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of IORA Council of Ministers, which France is very pleased to attend.

With more than one million French citizens living in the South-West of the Indian Ocean, France is an Indian Ocean Rim State. As such, France became a full member of the Indian Ocean Commission in 1986. President Hollande participated in the recent and successful summit hosted by the Comoros last August.

I am glad to be here in Perth, together with a delegate of the Regional Council of La Réunion. The French region of La Réunion, the most populated of French overseas territories, is indeed very active in the Indian ocean Rim. La Réunion has not only developed mutually fruitful relations with neighbouring countries in Africa, but also with other member States of IORA in Asia and Australia. Its population and its cultural heritage are representative of the diversity of the people of the Indian Ocean.

France has contributed actively to the international efforts to strengthen peace and security in the Indian Ocean, and is fighting today piracy, trafficking and terrorism. Regrettably, no region of the world can consider itself as safe. We have to be united to face that risk.

Today, France endeavours to work with the IORA and all its members, in order to face common challenges together, such as economic growth, maritime security, the preservation of biodiversity and, of course, the fight against climate change which is a particular threat for all the IORA coastal countries.

Excellencies, for all these reasons and recognizing the dynamism of the Organisation, I would be grateful to IORA member states to consider the possibility for France to become a full member of the Association.

Please let me stress and acknowledge the great work done by Australia during its presidency of the IORA. We are looking forward to working closely with the IORA Secretariat and its Chair in the future.

Thank you for your attention./.



JAPAN

Remarks by Mr. Koichi Funayama, Consul-General of Japan in Perth at the Opening Session of IORA Council of Minister's Meeting on 9 October 2014

Madam Chair,  
Distinguished Delegates  
Dialogue Partners,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here on behalf of the Government of Japan.

First, let me state that the issue of highest priority for IORA, we believe, is the pursuit of the economic prosperity of the countries in the region. The development of this region, which has great economic potential as new center for world growth, is in the world's common interest. It is important that the Indian Ocean will function as an open and stable global common for the enhancement of economic relations throughout the regions of the Middle East, Africa, Asia and the Indian Ocean rim.

To this end, it is important to reinforce the three principles of the rule of law at sea, which was proposed by Prime Minister Shizo Abe at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May. That is, states shall make and clarify claims based on international law; states shall not use force or coercion in trying to drive claims; and states shall seek to settle disputes by peaceful means.

In September, Prime Minister Abe held meetings with leaders of India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka and shared with them the importance of the freedom of navigation and overflight. Japan and Sri Lanka decided newly establish a dialogue on maritime security and oceanic issues and also to strengthen cooperation between maritime safety authorities, which includes the commencement of a survey with a view to providing patrol vessels from Japan to Sri Lanka.

Japan strongly hopes that IORA will play a positive role in promoting the rule of law in the maritime field.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Being home to 30 percent of the world's population, this region has great potential to become the next world growth center. On the other hand, one of the future challenges in the region will be the advancement of integration while utilizing its diversity.

Japan has been actively engaged in the region in an economic context. When Prime Minister Abe visited Bangladesh and Sri Lanka last month, he took a business mission consisting of several dozens of Japanese business leaders. This served to strengthen the economic relationship based on the needs of both countries. With regard to Africa, at the first ministerial meeting in May following the fifth Tokyo International Conference on African development, or the TICAD V, last year, Japan affirmed the

steady implementation of assistance it pledge at the TICAV V and its support for self-driven economic development by African nations themselves.

Japan hopes that IORA will further develop and become a forum that will contribute to open economic integration, in a manner similar to APEC's central role in promoting trade and investment liberalization in the Asia-Pacific region.

In conclusion, I have every confidence that this year's IORA meeting will be an opportunity for IORA to take the next leap forward and enhance mutual understanding and ties among members and dialogue partners.

Thank you.

UNITED KINGDOM

**Statement from Prof. Richard Morris, Head of Pacific Department at the 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM), Perth Australia, 9 October 2014**

Chair, Foreign Minister Bishop  
Secretary-General  
Other Ministers  
Excellencies  
Distinguished participants

I should like to thank the Indian Ocean Rim Association for inviting UK, as a Dialogue Partner, to address you today. It's a great privilege to do so.

The UK would like to start by paying tribute to Australia's chairmanship of the Association and its effort to take forward IORA's stated mission of building a safer and more prosperous Indian Ocean region and for doing it in such a creative and dynamic way.

I note that this year's programme focusses on IORA's core mandate of economic cooperation and encapsulates a range of business events under the banner of IORA business week to boost trade and investment.

A prosperous Indian Ocean community is in all of our interest. UK companies are active around the region, including in the resources sector and we welcome the participation of business and the useful interventions of the speakers earlier this morning.

The UK supports the Association taking incremental and practical steps towards greater regional cooperation based on shared values and norms.

A "level playing field" for IORA trading with both members and nonmembers will help expand commercial opportunities and enhance growth.

We also commend the Association on the work you are undertaking to create opportunities for business through moves towards trade liberalization.

The UK supports the region's focus on the sustainable development and protection of its ocean space, often referred to as the "Blue or Ocean economy". We hope that there will be opportunities for further practical cooperation in this coming year and in the years ahead.

We also like to pay tribute to the important work of the Chair, with others, on women and girls that includes economic and other empowerment.

Besides trade, UK remains closely committed to maritime security in the Indian Ocean. We are pleased to observe the sustained decline and containment of pirate attacks in the last two years due to increased international - including regional - cooperation to tackle this scourge of the seas. For without security for the region, there can be no prosperity.

We were delighted to work in partnership with Seychelles in creating and providing funds for the maritime security body called RAPPIC. This centre of expertise, working closely with Australia and other international partners, has since been renamed the Regional Fusion and Law Enforcement Centre for Safety and Security at Sea to reflect its enhanced role from being purely counter piracy to include the fight against transnational organised crime.

The UK encourages the Association to take a similar collaborative approach both in its own activities and in its coordination with relevant international and regional organisations.

The UK will remain committed to supporting our partners in the Indian Ocean community.

Thank you once again for allowing us to address you.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

**Counselor Shannon's Remarks (as prepared for delivery)  
Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) Council of Ministers Meeting  
Perth, Australia  
October 9, 2014**

Madam Chair, Mr. Secretary General, distinguished delegates, thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today. It is my privilege to convey the greetings of U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and his thanks to the Government of Australia for hosting this Ministerial Meeting of the Indian Ocean Rim Association. This marks the second time the United States has participated as a dialogue partner since its acceptance in 2012. We look forward to building an increasingly productive relationship with the IORA as we work toward the mutual goals of economic prosperity, regional security and stability, and responsible and sustainable development of the Indian Ocean region's natural resources.

The importance of the Indian Ocean region to the global community will only continue to grow. Already two-thirds of the world's seaborne trade in oil, one-half of the world's seaborne container traffic, and one-third of the world's seaborne bulk cargo transits the region annually. These numbers show how important the region already is to the global economy.

IORA has already fostered greater cooperation between states in the region, which is essential to making progress on economic growth and employment, elevating standards of living, and ensuring peace and stability. To help achieve these goals, the United States strongly supports the six priority areas agreed by the Ministers in 2011. By strengthening cooperation between IORA member states, we can help facilitate global trade and improve the well-being of the billions of citizens living in the region. That is why we encourage member states to continue efforts to strengthen the IORA as an institution and build consensus on the pressing challenges facing the region.

Little more than a week ago President Obama met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. At that meeting both leaders committed to work more closely with other Indo-Pacific countries through dialogues and consultations. They stressed the need to accelerate work on infrastructure connectivity and economic development corridors for regional economic integration linking South, Southeast, and Central Asia. This vision is applicable to the entirety of the Indian Ocean region – from Mombasa to Mumbai to Melbourne – which would benefit greatly from a freer flow of commerce and energy. We are therefore greatly encouraged by this Council of Ministers Meeting's emphasis on economic integration in promoting economic growth and prosperity.

Furthermore, we are working closely with partner countries across the Indian Ocean region to strengthen women's economic participation because we recognize the critical role women play in fostering growth, development, and security. Women control \$15 trillion in global spending. And by 2028, women will be responsible for about two-thirds of consumer spending worldwide. In Indonesia, women own more than half a million small and medium enterprises and in India they contribute nearly 20 percent of the country's GDP. The United States joins countries around the region in its recognition

that if we remove barriers to women's economic participation, we are investing in the transformation of our economies.

Through forums like the African Women's Entrepreneurship Program, the United States is supporting networks of women entrepreneurs across sub-Saharan Africa, who are poised to transform their societies by owning, running, and operating small and medium businesses, and by becoming voices for social advocacy in their communities. In South Asia, we launched the South Asia Women's Economic Symposium, to foster cross border trade and commercial exchange. Fostering women's workforce partnership is not only critical to boosting economic growth, it also produces a multiplier effect – women reinvest a large portion of their income in their families and communities. Women also play key roles in creating peaceful and stable societies – important factors for economic growth.

Additionally, IORA offers an opportunity for cooperation on oceans issues. We were pleased by the international support for Secretary Kerry's "Our Ocean" conference in June, which was organized to galvanize actions to address the impact on our ocean from climate change and other threats. IORA's "Blue Economy" initiative connects to and complements the themes raised in the "Our Ocean" conference. We would like to explore opportunities to support the "Blue Economy" initiative to end overfishing, reduce pollution entering the marine environment, stem ocean acidification, and expand protected ocean areas.

With regard to maritime security, over the last few years we have seen continued progress on reducing the threat to commerce posed by piracy. Much of that progress has been due to improved information sharing, coordination between national security and law enforcement agencies, and stronger legal capacities for detaining and prosecuting pirates. The United States has robust maritime security cooperation with a number of IORA members and dialogue partners, and we will continue to play an active role in counter-piracy efforts, and to ensure freedom of navigation more broadly.

As we work together to improve regional maritime security and enhance trade with one another, we must recognize the potential for maritime and territorial disputes to disrupt our vision of a peaceful and economically prosperous region. We think multilateral bodies like the IORA have an important role to play in upholding and reaffirming key principles of international maritime law, such as freedom of navigation. Similarly, throughout the world, we strongly believe that all countries should be clear in making and pursuing their territorial claims in accordance with international law. The South China Sea, vital to global commerce and energy trade, provides the clearest example where maritime collaboration is needed. But it is not the only one. It is in this context that we welcome Bangladesh's decision to pursue a UN Convention of the Law of the Sea decision to delineate its maritime borders, thereby providing a model that can be used to resolve international border disputes elsewhere in the region.

While we should celebrate this progress, other transnational threats require our unified attention. Drug and weapons trafficking remain serious problems. Even more pressing is the serious threat posed by terrorist organizations, such as the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, or ISIL. Although ISIL's main focus is Syria and Iraq, its aspirations and impact are global – the networks that facilitate the travel, funding, and recruitment of foreign terrorist fighters stretch far beyond Syria and Iraq and affect the entire Indian Ocean region.

We encourage IORA members to take action, where possible, to counter the flow of foreign fighters and funding and to speak out against the barbaric actions of ISIL.

Thank you again for the opportunity to join this week's discussions, which have reaffirmed for us the importance of our continued work on the six priority areas identified in 2011, as well as the additional challenges that have arisen since then. The United States believes that the IORA can play a positive role in building consensus to meet the challenges facing the region. We are committed to IORA's success, and we are honored to be a dialogue partner.