

Address made by

**H.E Mr.Majid Bizmark, Director General
For Multilateral Economic Cooperation,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Islamic Republic of Iran**

**At the 15th Meeting of the Council of Ministers of IORA
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In the name of the Almighty God

**Honorable Madam Chair,
Honorable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am very pleased to have the opportunity to address, on behalf of my country, at this sincere and august meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers. I would like, at the outset, to congratulate Indonesia on its election to the IORA Chairmanship.

I am confident that under Indonesia's skillful leadership, IORA will further strengthen and achieve its objectives. I hope this meeting will succeed to take another step toward the attainments of the lofty objectives of this body.

I would like also to seize the opportunity to appreciate and congratulate Australia on its successful tenure as Chair of IORA in 2013 till 2015. Australia, during her leadership in IORA, highly contributed to achieve its objectives by proposing and advancing various initiatives.

Excellencies,

The Indian Ocean is considered as a sea highway for world trade. In this line I.R of Iran is persistent in enhancing the level of cooperation in the region through introducing a visionary approach and focused attention in the framework of IORA. In order to reach a desirable level of collaboration and deserved quality of cooperation in the region we need to focus on the following areas:

1. To enhance the level of understanding through people to people contact, educational and academic visits, and governmental-based dialogue,
2. To devise and plan infrastructural projects in different fields such as IT, Tourism, Sea Transportation and Shipping Lines,
3. To enhance sub-regional dynamism and more responsible involvement of sub-regional states in IORA based projects and initiatives,
4. To facilitate trade and close engagement of IORA member states with the aim of boosting intra-trade through conclusion of an IORA Trade Agreement,
5. To boost the level of cooperation among Free Trade Zones of IORA.

In this line, I would like to announce that we are going to hold the 1st Conference on IORA Free Trade Zones Authorities in the beginning of 2016 in Iran.

**Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

As we are approaching the 20th anniversary of the IORA inception, it is appropriate to have a look at our past activities, where we are now and what would be our way ahead, with a critical evaluation.

To achieve all lofty objectives of the IORA, it is required to encourage member states to define projects bi-laterally or multi-laterally, examine each and every area of cooperation, setting target along with introducing timetables. In this connection, it is necessary to devise Short, Medium and Long term goals with its interval

assessment and evaluating mechanism. The Secretariat role would be crucial by submitting regular progress reports to the COM and CSO meetings.

**Madam chair,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am happy to announce that Science and Technology is one of the main areas for cooperation in the Association and its regional Center for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) is based in Iran. My Government has spared no effort to support the Center to materialize its objectives. To this end, it allocates annual 200,000 Dollars to the Center.

In closing, I, once again, thank the organizer of the meeting as well as the host country of Indonesia and IORA Secretariat for their excellent arrangement.

Thank you for your kind attention