

**OPENING REMARKS**  
**3<sup>RD</sup> INDIAN OCEAN DIALOGUE**  
Mercure Hotel, Padang, Indonesia  
Wednesday, 13 March 2016, 08.30 a.m.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

*Assalamualaikum wr wb,*  
Peace be with you. And good morning.

Welcome to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Indian Ocean Dialogue in Padang, Indonesia.

As a 1.5 track forum, which involves government officials and think tanks from IORA Member States, Dialogue Partners and interested countries, Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD) is an important source of fresh insights and recommendations for the advancement of cooperation in the Indian Ocean region.

This time the Dialogue carries the theme, “Addressing Maritime Security Challenges in the Indian Ocean through Enhanced Regionalism,” which is in line with the theme of Indonesia’s IORA chairmanship, “Strengthening Maritime Cooperation in a peaceful and stable Indian Ocean”.

This Dialogue covers issues on rules-based regionalism; piracy and armed robbery, illicit trafficking and maritime terrorism; regional cooperation on IUU fishing; the role of naval powers in enhancing security; and energy exploration and security in the Indian Ocean.

These issues are vast, diverse, complex, multidimensional, interlinked and simultaneous. These issues could lead to open conflict without proper management.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are here today to talk about these said issues.

The discussions and outcome of this Dialogue will deepen our understanding of challenges confronting all of us and generate constructive ideas for enhancing cooperation in the region.

Furthermore, the Dialogue is held back to back with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Multilateral Naval Exercise Komodo, the 16<sup>th</sup> Western Pacific Naval Symposium and the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Fleet Review. Its parallel events will also foster trust and confidence among participant states to explore strategic cooperation that may lead to more cooperative undertakings based on our shared interests and our capabilities.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the 15<sup>th</sup> Council of Ministers Meeting of IORA here in Padang last year, Member States underlined the need to strengthen the regional architecture of the Indian Ocean.

The Meeting also emphasized the importance of commemorating next year the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IORA in a strategic and substantive manner.

These are timely and appropriate initiatives in the face of the stark challenges that Indian Ocean countries must address, including persistent traditional and non-traditional security issues. Moreover, latent maritime disputes may surface at any time and severely affect the region's peace and stability.

At the same time, the region needs to accelerate economic growth, architecture building and comprehensive cooperation.

For these reasons, the IORA Ministers' Meeting agreed to start the process of crafting a document that will strengthen regional architecture building while enhancing relevant and concrete cooperation.

That document would be the IORA Concord.

It is envisioned that the Concord will be agreed upon and adopted by the leaders at the first IORA Summit in March next year here in Indonesia, in conjunction with the observance of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of IORA.

Let me now assure you that the process of bringing off the Concord will be inclusive and the voice of every member will be heard and taken into account in the deliberations.

The Concord should reflect the shared interests and commitment of all Member States, so that they will have a strong sense of its ownership.

I look forward to an intensive discussion on the envisioned IORA Concord in this Dialogue, thereby yielding insights and ideas that will be useful to the process of reaching the Concord.

Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Besides IORA, there are other forums at work in the Indian Ocean region.

These include sub-regional platforms that cover broad areas of cooperation, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation or SAARC, and the Common Market for Eastern and South Africa or COMESA.

They also include those covering specific interests such as the Indian Ocean Naval Symposium or IONS and the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission or IOTC.

There is plenty of room for collaboration between IORA and these forums and other international organizations.

In this regard, I am pleased to congratulate IORA on its getting accredited to the African Union, and on its obtaining observer status at the United Nations General Assembly.

Distinguished Delegates,

In this occasion allow me to also invite you to attend the International Symposium on IORA which Indonesia will convene on September 13<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> this year under the theme of "Learning from the Past and Charting the Future".

It will serve as an important platform for all stakeholders to reflect on IORA's voyage over the past two decades. Above all, we hope that the symposium will garner ideas on how we can transform IORA to be a more down-to-earth, effective and meaningful regional organization following its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Distinguished delegates

There is a West Sumatran saying that goes: "**Saumpamo aua jo tabiang, umpamo ikan jo aia.**" Freely translated, it means, "True friends help and support one another."

It is in this spirit that I declare this Dialogue officially open.

Thank you.

*Wassalamualaikum wr.wb.*