

**Speech Delivered by  
Hon. Dr. Abdusalam H. Omer, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Investment Promotion  
Federal Republic of Somalia**

**Excellences and ladies and gentleman,**

It is with enormous pleasure that I formally sign the Federal Republic of Somalia into the Indian Ocean RIM Association (IORA) family of nations today. IORA Member states are not only connected by the Indian Ocean but by history and the firm understanding of modern partnership and collective action for progress.

The key policy priorities of IORA which include maritime safety and security, trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, the blue economy and knowledge sharing but to name a few are fundamental for Somalia's development. As a member state we seek to both contribute and benefit from the partnerships within IORA to advance Somalia's great economic potential both at sea and in land.

Somalia already enjoys strong partnerships with almost all of the IORA member states and through our membership we endeavour to strengthen these further whilst establishing and nurturing new relations with other valuable partners.

Given that Somalia is in a post-conflict state and that our government is truly committed to investment led development IORA membership presents a great opportunity to connect aspiration and entrepreneurship among member states.

Maritime safety and security is paramount to international trade, especially among the IORA member states. Safety and security at sea is central to trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, the blue economy, tourism and cultural exchange.

We therefore are proud that there has been no recorded piracy off the coast of Somalia in recent years thanks to the effort of the Somalia Government and our valuable partners at sea and in land.

Furthermore the contributions of science, technology and academia, especially where the knowledge is shared meaningfully, has the potential to provide a unique opportunity for capacity building and effective knowledge sharing for the betterment of our nations and peoples prospects.

Excellencies and ladies and gentleman, the government of the Federal Republic of Somalia is committed to the empowering principles of the IORA charter which we have signed today. These principles built on partnerships and a common endeavour is the road map for a more interconnected, interdependent and prosperous Indian Ocean region. Therefore, our government will work with other IORA members through the different mechanisms to bring these principles and our common ambition to fruition.

I always joke that Somali fish are dying of old age, and they actually are. Through our membership of IORA and in partnership with the member states, we want to ensure that we all benefit from the great opportunities offered by the resource rich and beautiful nation of Somalia which I love and represent.

**I thank you very much.**