

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT NELSON MANDELA

It is a pleasure to extend my sincere greetings to you all on the occasion of the inauguration of the *Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Cooperation*.

South Africa has crossed the threshold to a new era of freedom, peace and democracy - able at last to address the needs of the majority of its people. As South Africans, we are faced with the question of how we can positively contribute to the international effort for peace, development and cooperation.

Beyond the parameters of our given role in the international arena and the formation of closer economic and political ties with other countries, we are sensitive to the need for such partnership to be expanded to include the notion of social and developmental cooperation and non-belligerent initiatives.

For centuries countries littoral to the Indian Ocean have been linked through trade and movement of people. The Indian Ocean Rim framework provides opportunities for the countries of the region to engage in mutually beneficial relations in the promotion of trade and investment, cooperation in the field of technology transfer and tourism; as well as serving in reinforce bilateral relations.

South Africans look forward to being part of such a process.

Nelson Mandela
President
Republic of South Africa