

**INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION (IORA)  
THE 22<sup>nd</sup> MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS**

**THE DHAKA COMMUNIQUÉ 2022**

**24 NOVEMBER 2022**

1. We, the Ministers and Heads of Delegation of the Member States of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA), Commonwealth of Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Union of Comoros, French Republic on account of Reunion (henceforth France/Reunion), Republic of India, Republic of Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Kenya, Republic of Madagascar, Malaysia, Republic of Maldives, Republic of Mauritius, Republic of Mozambique, Sultanate of Oman, Republic of Seychelles, Republic of Singapore, Federal Republic of Somalia, Republic of South Africa, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, United Republic of Tanzania, Kingdom of Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Republic of Yemen gathered on 24<sup>th</sup> of November 2022 in Dhaka, Bangladesh for the 22<sup>nd</sup> Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) under the theme “Harnessing the opportunities of the Indian Ocean sustainably for inclusive development” which was hosted by the Chair, Bangladesh.
2. We expressed condolences to the Government and People of Indonesia on the loss of hundreds of lives, thousands injured, and tens of thousands displaced as the result of the earthquake that struck Cianjur, West Java. We conveyed solidarity with Indonesia to overcome the multifaceted challenges brought about by this catastrophic event.
3. We are cognizant of the continued negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic upon global economic development, and the particular challenges faced by a number of IORA Member States. We noted the suggestions and assurances of Member States and Dialogue Partners regarding the need to promote an inclusive post-pandemic recovery from the impacts of the pandemic. We welcomed the Grant Agreement between the Government of Australia and IORA to support SIDS and/or LDCs Member States' COVID-19 response and recovery and encouraged Member States to apply for funding.
4. We acknowledged the valuable contributions made by TROIKA members, the People's Republic of Bangladesh as the Chair, the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka as the Vice-Chair, and the UAE, as the Past Chair. We committed to working closely with the Troika to ensure robust and inclusive development of the region through enhanced cooperation. We will endeavor

to address challenges and key issues facing our region, including recovery from disruptions to the global supply chain.

5. We welcomed the Republic of India as the Vice-Chair of IORA for the period 2023-2025.
6. We agreed that climate change is an important part of the IORA agenda. Climate change has already had an impact on the rise of global temperatures and sea levels, ocean acidification, sand and dust storms, more intense tropical cyclones and increase in frequency, resulting in widespread biodiversity loss and socio-economic impacts. It has negatively affected water supply, food security, health, industry, settlement, and society (especially for those located in coastal areas and river flood plains), infrastructure and labour productivity, which may lead to reduced economic growth and increased poverty and inequality.
7. We noted the substantial progress on developing and aligning the Work Plans of the IORA Functional Bodies to implement the 2nd IORA Action Plan (2022-2027) in IORA's priority areas and cross cutting issues, including on the Institutional Arrangements and Broadening Engagement. We appreciate the active engagement of the IORA Functional Bodies' Chair and Coordinating Countries and all Member States for their active support of the implementation of the IORA Action Plan.
8. We noted with satisfaction that the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) Chair, Bangladesh, has undertaken a range of activities to reinvigorate the IORBF, including hosting the first business leadership summit.
9. We also noted with appreciation the Strategic Framework of Action on Marine Debris in the Indian Ocean developed by Indonesia, in cooperation with our Dialogue Partner, Germany. We believe that the strategic framework will play an important role for further collaboration in combating marine debris in the IOR.
10. We commended France for committing to develop the IORA Guidelines to prevent entry of IUU fisheries products within IORA Member States' supply chains.
11. We conveyed appreciation to India for leading the development of the IORA Outlook on the Indo-Pacific. We also conveyed our gratitude to India for the establishment of the Mahatma Gandhi

Library and for successfully launching the e-office at the IORA Secretariat for effective and transparent decision making.

12. We welcomed the signing of several Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the IORA and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) for enhanced cooperation in areas of common interests. We also welcomed the three-year extension of the MoU with the NAM S&T Centre under its current provisions.
13. We acknowledged the initiatives taken by the IORA Secretariat in fostering collaboration with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO), the International Solar Alliance (ISA), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and Pacific Island Forum (PIF).
14. We expressed gratitude to Bangladesh for funding subscriptions to the Journal of the Indian Ocean Region (JIOR) for fourteen (14) Member States and the IORA Secretariat.
15. We expressed our delight that young diplomats from Bangladesh, Madagascar, South Africa, and Sri Lanka were hosted by the IORA Secretariat in Mauritius under the inaugural Nelson Mandela “Be the Legacy” Internship Programme (NMIP).
16. We welcomed Dr. Mohammad Reza Sanjabi and Dr. Dawood Suleiman Al-Yahyai assuming the positions of Director of the Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT) and of the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU), respectively. We conveyed our appreciation to Dr. Tahereh Miremadi, former Director of the RCSTT and Dr. Lubna H. Al-Kharusi, former Director of FSU, for their excellent contribution to the RCSTT/FSU and IORA during their tenure.
17. We expressed our appreciation to South Africa, the Chair of the Working Group on the Blue Economy (WGBE) for establishing the Working Group and for effectively monitoring the implementation of the WGBE Work Plan.
18. We recognized the completion of the initial three-year term of the IORA Blue Carbon Hub, hosted and funded by Australia. We welcomed the launch of the Hub’s flagship report on Blue Forest Finance, which proposes a series of policy options for our future consideration.

19. We appreciated the efforts made by Member States to advance Women's Economic Empowerment.
20. We conveyed appreciation to Bangladesh for its effective leadership in finalizing and implementing a new salary scale for IORA staff.
21. We noted at the highly successful IORA Search and Rescue exercises, hosted by Seychelles and Bangladesh with Australian support.
22. We acknowledged the various activities undertaken by the IORA Secretariat throughout the year to celebrate the IORA Day 2022 and the 25th Anniversary of the Association. We also thanked Member States for organizing activities to commemorate the 25th Anniversary, including Iran's initiative to hold the conference "IRAN & IORA: PROSPECTS & OPPORTUNITIES" and "25 YEARS OF IORA: WORKING TOWARDS A PROSPEROUS, SUSTAINABLE AND PEACEFUL INDIAN OCEAN REGION" in New Delhi by India and Indonesia.
23. We appreciated the willingness of the IORA Dialogue Partners to enhance their collaboration with IORA.
24. We thanked Germany and its Development Agency (GIZ) for its extensive and ongoing support for IORA, including through the IORA-GIZ MoU and Financing Contribution Agreements support for the Silver Jubilee celebrations hosting of the IORA Development Agency-Dhaka Development Initiative (IORDA-DDI) workshop in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh and "Be the Legacy" Internship Programme (NMIP).
25. We vowed to work closely with Dialogue Partners, Specialized Agencies, and Observers to achieve ecologically sustainable and socially inclusive economic growth and balanced development.
26. We appreciated the role UAE for leading the process regarding the IORA Development Initiative. We are confident that the Dhaka Development Initiative, renamed as the IORA Development Initiative (IDI), will play a key role in promoting regional integration, and economic and sustainable development initiatives in the region, with a view to enhance development cooperation activities.

27. We welcomed the launch of the UAE-led initiative, the Sheikh Zayed IORA Scholarship for Humanitarian Action and Development. This initiative acknowledges the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan's commitment to promoting global humanitarianism and sustainable development. It will play a significant role in improving the capacity and skills of young professionals within IORA. We also welcome continued support and financial contributions of IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners.
28. We recognized the significant role of the Member States during discussions at the 24<sup>th</sup> Committee of Senior Officials in Dhaka.
29. We appreciated the 'Strategic Dialogue' held between IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners at CSO and COM levels. We acknowledged that such platforms are essential for enhancing the engagement and strengthening cooperation between Member States and Dialogue Partners.
30. We agreed to reformat the Meetings of CSO and COM to make them more effective and efficient.
31. We congratulated our Member States, Indonesia and Thailand, for successfully hosting the G20 Summit in Bali and the APEC Summit in Bangkok.
32. We noted the end of term of Mr Gareth Rees from South Africa and Mr Saravanan Murugan from India and recognised their valuable work to enhance the activities of IORA.
33. We extend our sincere thanks and appreciation to the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh for arranging the 22<sup>nd</sup> Council of Ministers' (COM) and 24<sup>th</sup> Committee of Senior Officials' (CSO) meetings in-person. We consider it a gesture of commitment to strengthening solidarity. We also express gratitude for the warm hospitality extended during the hosting of the 22<sup>nd</sup> COM and related meetings in Dhaka.

**Dhaka, Bangladesh  
24 November 2022**