

DRAFT

Memorandum of Understanding

Between

the Indian Ocean Commission
(IOC)

and

the Indian Ocean Rim Association
(IORA)

PREAMBLE

The Indian Ocean Rim Association (hereinafter referred to as "IORA) and the Indian Ocean Commission (hereinafter referred to as "IOC") and alternatively both jointly referred to as "the parties";

PURSUANT to the decisions of the 28th Council of Ministers of IOC, the 21th meeting of the IORA Committee of Senior Officials, the Committee of Liaison Officer of IOC held virtually on 10 December 2020 and the 22nd Meeting of the IORA Committee of Senior Officials held virtually on 15-16 December 2020.

CONSIDERING that all of the Member States of the IOC are either members of IORA

CONSIDERING that the aim of IORA- is to promote sustainable growth and balanced development of the region and of the Member States, and to create common ground for regional economic cooperation;

CONSIDERING that the strategic objectives of the IOC as adopted on the 16th January 2005 by its Council are to develop policies and programmes among the member States in political, sustainable development including economic, social and cultural fields for the mutual benefit of the member states;

CONSIDERING that one of the objectives of the IOC is to promote the sub-region's interests in the economic integration process of IORA- based on its specificity and the principle of subsidiarity;

AWARE that, in order to enhance economic development in the region, the need to create an enabling environment for foreign, cross border and domestic investment including the promotion of research and development and the adoption of concerted positions in the international fora is paramount;

AWARE that reinforcing regional economic integration also require improving the management of marine and coastal resources which are shared by Member States of both Regional Organisations;

RECALLING also that under section 4 of the Charter of the IORA and Article 8 of the Victoria Agreement establishing the IOC, both parties may enter into co-operation agreements with Third Parties;

REALIZING that both organisations shared common goals and the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between IORA- and IOC would avoid duplication, ensure an effective utilisation of scarce human resources and facilitate collaboration and complementarity between IORA and IOC for the benefit of their Member/Partner States;

NOW, THEREFORE, THE PARTIES HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

Article 1 Areas of Cooperation

1. The parties agree to cooperate in the field of environment and sustainable development, economic, trade cooperation and investment, R&D and development of human resources, and in whatever field related to achieving sustainable development objectives for their mutual benefit and the benefit of their member states.
2. In pursuit of the cooperation stipulated in paragraph 1, the parties will:
 - (a) ensure that the specificity of small islands developing states or small economies are promoted;
 - (b) collaborate in the regional process or in international fora, in particular in issues relating to coastal and marine resources, including maritime safety and security, fishing, meteorology, telecommunications and connectivity;
 - (c) pursue the development of common programmes which will enable both parties to effectively and efficiently utilise the available resources for concrete actions to achieve the objectives of their respective mandates.
3. The cooperation between the parties may relate, but is not restricted to the following areas:
 - (a) Trade and investment facilitation, entrepreneurship and business competitiveness, customs co-operation generally and the consolidation of the Free Trade Area in particular;
 - (b) Maritime safety and security
 - (c) Public health
 - (d) Biodiversity and natural resources management, blue economy, fisheries management;
 - (e) Academic, science and technology cooperation;
 - (f) Disaster risk management;
 - (g) Civil society, gender and economic empowerment;
 - (h) development of programmes to enhance movement of people, labour and services across borders in the region;
 - (i) development of joint transport and communication programmes particularly relating to connectivity by sea and air-transport and ICT to alleviate the isolation of the Island States;
 - (j) enhancement of peace and security in the region;
 - (k) tourism and cultural exchanges.
 - (l) other activities of mutual interest as may be agreed upon from time to time.

Article 2 Consultations and Exchange of Information and expertise

1. The parties shall convene regular consultations to discuss issues of common interest with the view of defining suitable means and ways for the implementation of planned activities.
2. The parties agree to exchange expertise in such matters of common interest and activities as shall from time to time be agreed upon.

Article 3 Financial Responsibility

1. The parties shall individually and jointly mobilise financial resources for the implementation of activities of common interest envisaged under this Memorandum of Understanding. Such activities shall be determined by mutual agreement between the parties.
2. Work plans shall be developed on a short and long-term basis for planning and implementation of activities of common interest.

Article 4 Reciprocity

1. The parties shall endeavour to invite each other to conferences and meetings of each other's policy organs as well as seminars, workshops, symposia and training courses organised by each party and which are of mutual interest to the parties.
2. The parties agree to work towards the avoidance of duplication of efforts in areas of common interest where each one of them has attained progress; in this regard the parties shall harmonise programmes of their meetings.

Article 5 Supplementary Agreements

1. The parties may enter into supplementary agreements as the need arises and this Memorandum of Understanding shall not preclude the parties from entering into any working relationships or agreements with other IORA-related or IOC-related institutions.

Article 6 Amendments

1. The Memorandum of Understanding may be amended at any time by mutual agreement subject to one month notice.

**Article 7
Termination**

1. Either party may terminate this Memorandum of Understanding by giving the other party a notice period of six months.

**Article 8
Survival of Obligations**

1. The termination of this Memorandum of Understanding shall not discharge or release from obligations of the parties that accrued during the operation of the Memorandum of Understanding.

**Article 9
Dispute Resolution**

1. Any dispute between the parties as a result of the operation of this Memorandum of Understanding shall be resolved amicably between the parties through a process of negotiation.

**Article 10
Entry into Force**

1. This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force upon signature by the duly authorised representatives of the parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties, each acting through its duly authorised representative, have signed this Memorandum of Understanding on this.

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MS NOMVUYO NOKWE
SECRETARY GENERAL
FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM ASSOCIATION

[IORA]

.....
MR VÉLAYOUDOM MARIMOUTOU
SECRETARY GENERAL
FOR THE INDIAN OCEAN COMMISSION
(IOC)