

**Statement of the ECO Secretary General,
Ambassador Khusrav Noziri
at the International Conference “*Iran and IORA:
Prospects and Opportunities*”
Tehran, IPIS, 23 October 2022**

**Distinguished Participants,
Eminent Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good Day,

It is a privilege for me to participate in this important conference. I extend my sincere thanks to the event’s organizers for inviting me to express my views on the forum.

I avail this opportunity to congratulate the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) and its Member States as this year marks the silver jubilee of the Organization.

IORA is a platform of nations with a variety of cultures, values, climates and geographies. The scope of cooperation in the IORA is quite comprehensive and in line with today’s needs and aspirations.

On the other hand, the IORA region possesses invaluable mineral, metal and fisheries resources. These resources, if judiciously used, can cushion sustainable industrial and human development.

The Islamic Republic of Iran became member of the IORA in early years of its establishment, occupying an important position in the Organization. Iran hosts Regional Center of Science and Technology (RCSTT), which is an effective and one of the two Specialized Agencies of IORA that continues to enjoy strong support and patronage of the country.

Given the IORA’s wide and promising prospects of cooperation, Iran with its considerable capacities has shown great interest in expanding relations with IORA. Iran’s recent reinforcement of a national coordination mechanism for IORA appears to refresh and revitalize their sharing and participation in IORA priority areas of cooperation.

The potential of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the other IORA Member States can mutually and additionally be exploited with further enhancement in their collaborative efforts and activities.

Iran sits at the mouth of the Strait of Hormuz, which connects the oil-rich Persian Gulf to the rest of the world. It possesses deep sea ports with enormous cargo handling capacity. The country is surrounded by several landlocked Central Asian Nations and has the potential to be a regional hub of trade and investment.

At the same time the Islamic Republic of Iran is an important founding Member of the Economic Cooperation Organization and we appreciate and encourage the growing partnership between Iran and IORA. We consider that Iran's exposure and collaboration with IORA will, somehow, serve and enrich the working mechanism and agenda of the ECO.

While acknowledging the potential benefits of Iran-IORA collaboration and partnership, I further observe that the ECO and IORA share some identical areas of cooperation. These areas include, trade & investment, disaster risk management, academic, science & technology cooperation, tourism and cultural exchanges, as well as cooperation for economic development in general.

Like IORA, the Economic Cooperation Organization is focused on the shared development of its Member States. The two sides' interaction and sharing of skills, expertise and experiences with each other can be apt and accommodative to serve their common aims and objectives.

To this end, the ECO and IORA, with kind and expert assistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran, may enter into a collaborative partnership. Joint working strategy or mechanism to meet such a progressive end may be devised in shape of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

Considering the fact that synergic and integrative approaches bear significant and impactful outcomes, ECO remains ever-ardent and receptive to collaborate with other regional and socioeconomic setups. This is aimed at facilitating the process of joint development and growth in the Member States.

Before closing my remarks, I once again felicitate IORA for celebrating its 25th Anniversary, and Organization's partnership with Iran that marks the beginning of IORA.

Moreover, I also commend and value the sincere efforts of the Islamic Republic of Iran for organizing and hosting such important and interactive event.

Thank you.