The Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

Introduction

IORA is an inter-governmental organization which was established on 7 March 1997. The Association is intended to facilitate and promote economic co-operation, bringing together inter-alia representatives of Member States' governments, businesses and academia. In a spirit of multilateralism, the Association seeks to build and expand understanding and mutually beneficial co-operation through a consensus-based, evolutionary and non-intrusive approach.

Promoting sustained growth and balanced development within the Indian Ocean region, IORA strengthens cooperation among its 23 Member States and dialogue with its 10 Dialogue Partners.

Priority Areas

IORA has identified six priority areas, namely; maritime security, trade and investment facilitation, fisheries management, disaster risk reduction, academic and scientific cooperation and tourism promotion and cultural exchanges. The two cross-cutting issues are the Blue Economy and Women's Economic Empowerment.

IORA Structure

Council of Foreign Ministers

Council of Foreign Ministers (COM), as an apex body which meets annually, formulates policy, reviews progress on co-operation and makes decisions on new areas of co-operation. It also deliberates on the establishment of additional mechanisms and Specialized Agencies, and on matters of general interest. The Council of Ministers elects a Chair and a Vice Chair of the Association, each for a period of two years.

Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)

A committee of Senior Officials (CSO) meets twice a year to progress IORA's agenda and consider recommendations by Working Groups and forums of officials, business and academics to implement policies and projects to improve the lives of people within the Indian Ocean Member States.

Membership

IORA Member States are Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, France, India, Indonesia, and I.R. of Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Seychelles, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Tanzania, Thailand, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Dialogue Partners of IORA, those individual sovereign states with a special interest and/or capacity to contribute to IORA, particularly in the areas of common interest, include China, Egypt, Germany, Italy, Japan, South Korea, Russia, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States of America.

IRAN & IORA

The Islamic Republic of Iran joined the IORA in 1999. From 2006 to 2008, Iran Chaired the Association for 3 years. Accordingly, the sixth, seventh, and eighth IORA Ministerial Meetings were held in Tehran. Iran has been also chairing the Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) since 2022 for two years.

One, out of two IORA specialized Agencies, namely the "Regional Centre for Science and Transfer of Technology (RCSTT) is hosted by the Islamic Republic of Iran (the other one is the "Fisheries Support Unit (FSU) in Muscat, Oman).

RCSTT was established in 2008. Its objective is to promote regional integration and co-operation among the IORA Member States by supporting applied research, networking, technology transfer and commercialization.



Iran-IORA Conference, October 2022, IPIS-Tehran

https://www.iora.int/en