**Report of the 21st Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM)**

 **Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

**7 November 2019**

**DECISION REPORT**

(As adopted on 7 November 2019)

The 21st Meeting of the Council of Ministers (COM) took place at the Abu Dhabi Edition Hotel in **Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates** on **7 November 2019** under the theme “Promoting a Shared Destiny and Path to Prosperity in the Indian Ocean”. The Meeting was chaired by H.E. Ahmed Al Sayegh, Minister of State of the United Arab Emirates, and was attended by representatives of IORA Member States namely **Commonwealth of Australia, People's Republic of Bangladesh, Union of Comoros, 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.** The **Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT)**, the **Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)** as Specialised Agencies of IORA as well as the **Chair in Indian Ocean Studies at the University of Mauritius** **(CIOS)** also attended the meeting.

**1. OPENING SESSION** *(Open to Member States and Dialogue Partners)*

**1.1 Welcome Address and Report from the Outgoing Chair (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The COM noted the outgoing Chair’s Hand-Over Report.

**1.2 Handing over of the Chair – Welcoming Remarks by Incoming Chair (UAE)**

*Outcome:* The COM welcomed the UAE as the Chair of the COM meeting for a period of two years.

The COM noted the remarks by the Chair, UAE.

Member States expressed appreciation to South Africa as Outgoing Chair, and Indonesia as outgoing member of the Troika as Past Chair, and congratulated the UAE for assuming the Chair.

**1.3 Handing over of the Vice Chair - Remarks by Incoming Vice-Chair (Bangladesh)**

*Outcome:* The COM welcomed Bangladesh as the Vice-Chair of the COM meeting.

The COM noted the remarks by the Vice-Chair, Bangladesh.

**1.4 Outline of Arrangements and Adoption of the Agenda (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The Draft Agenda was adopted.

**1.5 Opening Remarks by the Secretary-General (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The COM noted the opening remarks by Dr Nomvuyo N. Nokwe, Secretary-General, IORA.

**2. SIGNING CEREMONY (Chair)**

**2.1 Instrument of Acceptance by the Republic of Maldives**

*Outcome:* The COM witnessed the signing of the Instrument of Acceptance by the Republic of Maldives.

**2.2 MOU signature on the promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by the United Republic of Tanzania**

*Outcome:* The COM witnessed the signing of the MOU on the promotion of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) by the United Republic of Tanzania.

**2.3 MOU signature between IORA and the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned and other developing countries (NAM S&T Centre)** **on Application of Science and Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development**

*Outcome:* The COM witnessed the signing of the MOU on Application of Science and Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development between the IORA Secretariat and the NAM S&T Centre.

**SESSION II** *(Open to Member States and Dialogue Partners)*

**3. GENERAL DEBATE**

**3.1 Country Statements by Member States**

*Outcome:* The COM noted the country statements by Member States.

**3.2 Country Statements by Dialogue Partners**

*Outcome:* The COM noted the country statements by Dialogue Partners.

**SESSION III** *(Member States and Dialogue Partners)*

**4. MINISTERIAL WORKING LUNCHEON DISCUSSION (Chair)**

**SESSION IV** *(Closed session - Open to Member States only)*

**5. REPORT TO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS BY THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS** **(CSO Chair)**

*Outcome:* The COM considered and adopted the report of the CSO including its recommendations.

**6. INSTITUTIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS**

**6.1 Consideration of CSO Institutional Recommendations**

**6.1.1 Membership Applications**

**6.1.1.1 Republic of Italy as a Dialogue Partner**

*Outcome:* The COM approved the Republic of Italy as the 10th Dialogue Partner of IORA.

**6.1.1.2 Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) as an Observer**

*Outcome:* The COM approved the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) as an Observer of IORA.

**6.1.2 Amendment to the Rules of Procedure**

*Outcome:* The COM adopted the amended Rules of Procedure as per the recommendation of the CSO.

**7. CONSIDERATION OF OUTCOME DOCUMENTS (Chair)**

**7.1 Abu Dhabi Communiqué**

*Outcome:* The COM adopted the Abu Dhabi Communiqué.

**8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Chair)**

The COM may be advised of any additional items to be considered.

*Outcome:* There was no other business.

**9. ADOPTION OF COM REPORT**

*Outcome:* The COM adopted the Decision Report of the 19th COM meeting.

**SESSION V** *(Session open to Member States and Dialogue Partners*)

**10. CLOSING REMARKS (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The COM noted the closing remarks by the Chair.

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