AMENDED ON 7 NOVEMBER 2019

**Report of the 21st Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO)**

**Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates**

**5-6 November 2019**

**DECISION REPORT**

(As adopted on 6 November 2019 at 3.20pm)

The 21st Meeting of the Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) took place at the Abu Dhabi Edition Hotel in **Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates** on **5-6 November** **2019** under the theme “Promoting a Shared Destiny and Path to Prosperity in the Indian Ocean”. The meeting was chaired by H.E. Abdulnasser Alshaali, Director of the Economic and Trade Affairs Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, 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**

* 1. **Welcome Address and Report of the outgoing Chairperson (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the outgoing Chair’s Report.

* 1. **Handing over of the Chair & Welcoming remarks by the incoming Chairperson (UAE)**

*Outcome:* The UAE assumed the position of Chair of the CSO for a period of two years.

The CSO noted the remarks by the Chair, the UAE.

The CSO 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 position of Chair.

* 1. **Handing over of the Vice Chair - Remarks by incoming Vice Chairperson (Bangladesh)**

*Outcome:* Bangladesh assumed the position of Vice-Chair for a period of two years.

CSO noted the remarks by the Vice-Chair, Bangladesh.

The CSO congratulated Bangladesh for assuming the position of Vice-Chair.

* 1. **Outline of Arrangements and Adoption of the Agenda (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The Draft Agenda was adopted by the CSO.

* 1. **Report of the Secretary-General (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of the IORA Secretary-General*.*

**2. MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE IORA ACTION PLAN (2017-2021)**

**2.1 Report and discussion on implementation 2017-2019 (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* See item 2.3.

**2.2 Identification of future Coordinating and Cluster Countries (2019-2021) (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO endorsed the proposed future Coordinating and Cluster Countries for recommendation to the COM, as per the following table.

The table reflects the following announcements which were welcomed by the CSO:

- from India, that it would join the ‘Institutional Arrangements and Broadening Engagement’ Cluster;

- from Indonesia, that it will join the Academic, Science and Technology Cooperation Cluster;

- from Iran, that it would join the Maritime Safety and Security Cluster;

- from Singapore, that it would join the Trade and Investment Facilitation Cluster;

- from Sri Lanka, that it will join the Blue Economy Cluster;

- from Oman, that it will join the Fisheries Management and Tourism and Cultural Exchanges Clusters;

- from Tanzania, that it will join the Maritime Safety and Security, Trade and Investment Facilitation, Fisheries Management, and Tourism and Cultural Exchanges Clusters.

Table reflecting updated Priority Area Coordinating Countries and Cluster members:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **SRN.** | **PRIORITY AREA** | **COORDINATOR** | **CLUSTER GROUP** |
| **1.** | **Maritime safety and security** | Sri Lanka | Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, South Africa and UAE, Iran, Tanzania  *[Note new addition of Iran and Tanzania]* |
| **2.** | **TRADE AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION** | Mauritius | Australia, India, Iran, Malaysia and South Africa, Singapore, Tanzania  *[Note new addition of Singapore and Tanzania]* |
| **3.** | **FISHERIES MANAGEMENT** | Indonesia | Bangladesh, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Oman, Thailand, FSU, Tanzania  *[Note new addition of Oman and Tanzania]* |
| **4.** | **DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT** | India | Indonesia, Mauritius, Mozambique and Sri Lanka |
| **5.** | **ACADEMIC, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION** | India | Mauritius, UAE and South Africa, RCSTT, Indonesia  *[Note new addition of Indonesia]* |
| **6.** | **TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES** | UAE | Iran, Mauritius, Mozambique, Oman, Sri Lanka South Africa and Tanzania  *[Note new addition of Oman and Tanzania]* |
| **7.** | **BLUE ECONOMY** | South Africa | Australia, Bangladesh, Comoros, India, Indonesia, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Mauritius, Mozambique, Thailand, UAE, Sri Lanka, Tanzania  *[Note new addition of Sri Lanka, Tanzania]* |
| **8.** | **WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT** | Australia | India, Indonesia, Mauritius, South Africa, Thailand, UAE |
| **9.** | **INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND BROADENING ENGAGEMENT** | South Africa | Troika+, Mauritius, India  *[Note new addition of India]* |

**2.3 Discussion: Preparations for a New IORA Action Plan (2021 – 2025) (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO agreed that the Chair would arrange a dedicated workshop on the preparation of the new IORA Action Plan in the margins of the next CSO*.* This workshop would also consider the Mid Term Review of the IORA Action Plan 2017-2021.

**3. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF IORA’S ENGAGEMENT WITH DIALOGUE PARTNERS**

**3.1 Report and discussion on the status of engagement with the Dialogue Partners (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on engagement with Dialogue Partners.

The CSO welcomed India’s suggestion to prepare a Concept Note on the principles on which IORA’s cooperation with Dialogue Partners should be based, noting that this would strengthen IORA’s leadership of forthcoming partnerships and ensure a Member State-led process. The CSO requested the Concept Note to be circulated to all Member States **by 6 December 2019**.

On Germany, the CSO endorsed the Secretary-General proceeding to sign the MOU with GIZ.

On France, the CSO endorsed the proposed edits to the draft MOU between IORA and the French Development Agency (AFD). The CSO endorsed the Secretary-General to sign the MOU with AFD as soon as possible.

On the United States of America, the CSO agreed to progress this issue through discussions with a group of all interested Member States to determine a way forward.

**3.2 Preparations for the engagement by the CSO with Dialogue Partners (Chair)**

*Outcome:* This item was not considered.

**4. MEMBERSHIP**

**4.1 Application by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as Member State (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO, in the absence of consensus, deferred consideration of the application by the Republic of the Union of Myanmar as a Member State until the next CSO.

**4.2 Application by the Republic of France as Member State (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO requested the IORA Secretariat to obtain a legal assessment of whether France meets IORA’s membership criteria, to be circulated to Member States **before the end of 2019**. The CSO deferred consideration of France’s application until the completion of the assessment.

**4.3 Application by the Republic of Italy as Dialogue Partner (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO confirmed its recommendation that the COM approve the application of Italy.

**4.4 Application by the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) as Observer (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO endorsed the application by the Western Indian Ocean Marine Science Association (WIOMSA) as Observer for recommendation to the COM.

**4.5 Discussion on the definition of the Indian Ocean & development of IORA membership criteria (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO agreed to arrange a dedicated workshop to consider the status of IORA’s membership criteria. The CSO requested the Secretariat to write to all Member States **by 15 November 2019** seeking expressions of interest to host this workshop in early 2020.

**5. MARITIME SAFETY AND SECURITY (MSS)** – *Coordinating Country: Sri Lanka*

**5.1 Report: First Meeting of the IORA Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (WGMSS), 8-9 August 2019, Colombo, Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted Sri Lanka’s report on the hosting of the First Meeting of the IORA Working Group on Maritime Safety and Security (WGMSS).

The CSO noted Mauritius’ announcement that the third edition of the Ministerial Conference on Maritime Safety and Security would be organized in the first half of 2020, and future plans to organize a World Summit on Maritime Security. The CSO encouraged the Secretariat and Member States to participate fully in these events with a view to establishing cooperation with other regional organisations in this field.

**5.2 Proposal: IORA Workshop on Maritime Safety and Security with the support from the United Kingdom (Secretariat/Sri Lanka)**

*Outcome:* The CSO welcomed the offer of the United Kingdom to support a workshop on MSS to be held before March 2020. The CSO noted Sri Lanka had agreed in-principle on the proposal for the workshop, but needs more time to consider the detail. The CSO looks forward to further details being circulated in due course.

**6. TRADE AND INVESTMENT FACILITATION (TIF)** - *Coordinating Country: Mauritius*

**6.1 Terms of Reference (TOR) and Work Plan of the Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI)** **(South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of South Africa. The CSO endorsed the draft Terms of Reference for the WGTI and recommended them to be approved by the COM.

The CSO noted the Work Plan of the WGTI.

**6.2 Terms of Reference (TOR) and Work Plan of the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of South Africa that delegates to the IORBF are considering draft Terms of Reference and a draft Work Plan.

The CSO noted the UAE’s update that it was intending to host the next IORBF meeting in March 2020, and that further details would be circulated in due course.

**6.3 IORA Experts’ Meeting to Enhance Intra-Regional Trade and Investment, 5-6 December 2019, Mauritius (Mauritius)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report by Mauritius on the hosting of the IORA Experts’ Meeting to Enhance Intra-Regional Trade and Investment, including that the meeting had been postponed to late January, with exact dates to be confirmed shortly.

The CSO noted that intersessional approval had been granted by Member States of Mauritius’ Special Fund application with respect to this meeting.

The CSO noted Mauritius was also considering to host a Ministerial meeting of IORA Ministers of Trade and Investment in the first half of 2020, and that further details would be provided in due course.

**7. FISHERIES MANAGEMENT (FM)** - *Coordinating Country: Indonesia*

**7.1 Update: Cluster Meeting on Fisheries Management (Indonesia)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by Indonesia on the Cluster Meeting on Fisheries Management.

**7.2 Report: Activities of the Fisheries Support Unit (FSU)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the Report of the activities of the FSU.

**7.3 Consideration of FSU Action Plan 2019 – 2023 (Chair)**

*Outcome:* This item was deferred to the next CSO as the draft Action Plan 2019-2023 had not been finalized for circulation to Member States. The CSO requested that the draft Action Plan be shared with all Member States for inputs **by 4 December 2019**.

**7.4 Report: Workshop on Biennial Review of IORA Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector, 29-30 October 2019, Muscat, Sultanate of Oman (FSU)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of the FSU on the Workshop on the Biennial Review of the Fisheries and Aquaculture Sector in IORA, held on 29-30 October 2019, in Muscat, Sultanate of Oman.

**7.5 Update: Second Somalia-Yemen Development Programme (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the preparations of the second Somalia and Yemen Development Programme (SYDP), including that intersessional approval had been granted for Special Fund support.

**8.** **DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT (DRM)** - *Coordinating Country: India*

**8.1 Report: Joint Annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise, 2-4 August 2019, Chennai, India (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report by India on the outcomes of the Joint Annual Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief Exercise (HADR) that was held in Chennai, India, on 2-4 August 2019.

The CSO noted the outcome document ‘IORA Guidelines for HADR, Edition 1 (November 2019)’ for the consideration of Member States, with a view to finalizing the document **by November 2020**.

**8.2 Update: First Experts Group Meeting on DRM, December 2019 (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted India’s update on the First Experts Group Meeting on DRM, including the new dates of 4-5 March 2020, and that a Concept Note and administrative arrangements would be circulated by the end of November 2019.

**8.3 Report: IORA Workshop: Tsunami Early Warning Systems on the Lessons-learnt from the 2018 Tsunamis in Indonesia, 26-28 September 2019, Jakarta, Indonesia (Indonesia)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted Indonesia’s report on the outcomes of the IORA Workshop: Tsunami Early Warning Systems - Lessons-learnt from the 2018 Tsunamis in Indonesia, that took place on 26-28 September 2019, in Jakarta, Indonesia.

**8.4 Update: IORA Workshop by IORA-RCSTT / RWTH Aachen on Biomedical-engineering and other Innovative Technologies with relevance for Post-Disaster Situations, 18-21 November, Aachen University, Germany – jointly organised by RCSTT and GIZ (RCSTT)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by RCSTT on the hosting of the Workshop by IORA-RCSTT / RWTH Aachen on Biomedical-engineering and other Innovative Technologies with relevance for Post-Disaster Situations.

**9.** **ACADEMIC, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY COOPERATION (AST)** - *Coordinating Country: India*

**9.1 Update: Experts Group Meeting on Academic, Science and Technology, 12 December 2019 (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted India’s report that it had circulated ‘save the date’ notices to host the Experts’ Group on Academic, Science and Technology on 12 December 2019 under the theme of ‘harnessing seas for safety and security and energy connectivity’.

The CSO noted India’s report that the Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group would be held in parallel on 12 December 2019 under the theme of ‘sustainable development of the Indian Ocean’.

The CSO noted India’s report that the Indian Ocean Dialogue would be held on 13 December 2019.

The CSO noted that the Concept Note and administrative arrangements for these three meetings would be circulated shortly.

**9.2 Update: 25th Indian Ocean Rim Academic Group (IORAG), 12 December 2019 (India)**

*Outcome:* See item 9.1.

**9.3 Update: Sixth Indian Ocean Dialogue (IOD), 13 December 2019 (India)**

*Outcome:* See item 9.1.

**9.4 Report: Activities of the Regional Centre for Science and Technology Transfer (RCSTT)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of the RCSTT.

**9.5 Report: Activities of the Chair in Indian Ocean Studies (CIOS)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report of the CIOS.

**9.6 Update: Implementation of ICE for the IORA Member States (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India on the Implementation of ICE.

The CSO noted India’s request for inputs on the ICE project, including whether Member States wished the project to be entirely on-line or included an element of physical premises (that would need to be funded), and agreed that any inputs were to be sent to India via the Secretariat **by 22 November 2019**.

**9.7 Update: Journal of the Indian Ocean Region (JIOR) (Australia)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by Australia on the JIOR.

**9.8 Update: Proposals to finance research such as the JIORS including from the IORA Special Fund (CIOS)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from the CIOS and requested the CIOS to submit a Special Fund application including a costed breakdown to the Secretariat for consideration.

**9.9 Update: MoU between IORA and NAM Science & Technology Centre, New Delhi (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted India’s update that the signing of the MOU between IORA and the Centre for Science and Technology of the Non-Aligned Movement and other developing countries (NAM S&T Centre) on the Application of Science and Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Development would take place at the 19th COM Meeting on 7 November 2019.

**10.** **TOURISM AND CULTURAL EXCHANGES (TCE)** *- Coordinating Country: UAE*

**10.1 Update: First Core Group Meeting for Tourism (UAE)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the UAE on the First Core Group Meeting for Tourism which will be convened in the first quarter of 2020.

The CSO noted Oman’s update on the Tourism Resource Centre (TRC) initiative. The CSO requested that Oman circulate the proposed Action Plan of the TRC for Member State consideration.

**10.2 Update: Film Making Course at Film and Television Institute of India, Pune (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India on the Film Making Course at Film and Television Institute of India which will take place from 18 February to 18 March 2020, and that the Concept Note and administrative arrangements will be circulated in due course.

**10.3 Update: Cruise and Maritime Tourism Workshop in Mumbai/Goa in February 2020 (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India that the Cruise and Maritime Tourism Workshop will be convened on 20-21 February 2020 and that a Concept Note and administrative arrangements would be circulated in due course.

**11.** **BLUE ECONOMY (BE)** *- Coordinating Country: South Africa*

**11.1 Report: Workshop on “Improving knowledge for research on blue carbon in the Western Indian Ocean”, ISDP, 29 April to 4 May 2019, Madagascar (Madagascar)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from Madagascar on the outcomes of this event.

**11.2 Report: Third IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference (BEC-III), 4-5 September 2019, Dhaka, Bangladesh (Bangladesh)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the report by Bangladesh on the Third IORA Ministerial Blue Economy Conference (BEC-III), that took place on 4-5 September 2019, in Dhaka as well as the Dhaka Declaration on the Blue Economy and the key takeaways as outcome documents of the conference.

The CSO thanked the Government of Bangladesh for the excellent organisation and hosting of the conference including the Senior Officials’ meeting on 4 September 2019.

The CSO requested the Secretariat to provide clear time limits for inputs when circulating draft event reports to Member States, to facilitate efficient finalization of these reports.

**11.3 Update: First Meeting of the Working Group on Blue Economy (WGBE), 5-6 December 2019, Mauritius (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update report by South Africa that the First Meeting of the Working Group on Blue Economy (WGBE) would be held on 5-6 December 2019 in Mauritius.

**11.4 Report: Establishment of the IORA Blue Carbon Hub (Australia)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by Australia and welcomed the establishment of the IORA Blue Carbon Hub and upcoming activities, including the forthcoming “Early Career Visiting Scientist” program and blue carbon finance ‘thinktank’ to be held in Mauritius on 20-21 February 2020 and the Concept Note would be circulated in due course. A Concept Note would also be developed in collaboration with Bangladesh on a ‘thinktank’ meeting related to Blue Carbon Ecosystems to be held in Bangladesh in 2020.

**11.5 Update: Establishment of the IORA Centre of Excellence for Maritime Affairs (Malaysia/India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from Malaysia on the status of collaboration with India on the status of drafting the common criteria for the establishment of Centres of Excellence in IORA. India undertook to finalise the process with Malaysia in advance of the upcoming 25th IORAG meeting on 12 December 2019.

**11.6 Update: Establishment of the Maritime Transport Council (MTC) (Oman)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the Sultanate of Oman on the Establishment of the Maritime Transport Council (MTC) and that the process would be finalized soon.

**12.** **WOMEN’S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT (WGWEE)** -*Coordinating Country: Australia*

**12.1 Implementation of the Work Plan of the Working Group on Women’s Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) (Australia/Mauritius)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update on the implementation of the Work Plan of the Working Group on Women’s Economic Empowerment.

On the proposed cooperation on Women’s Economic Empowerment with the United States of America, the CSO agreed to progress this issue through discussions with a group of all interested Member States to determine a way forward.

The CSO noted the upcoming webinar to be hosted by UN Women on 26 November 2019, and encouraged greater promotion of this and future webinars by Member States.

The CSO noted the update from Mauritius that it proposed to hold a capacity building workshop on mainstreaming gender equality in IORA in early 2020, and that a Concept Note and administrative arrangements would be circulated in due course.

**13.** **INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS AND BROADENING ENGAGEMENT** - *Coordinating Country: South Africa*

**13.1 Annual IORA Calendar of events (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted progress made on the Annual Calendar of events. The CSO requested the Secretariat to write to all Member States **by 15 November 2019** seeking dates of proposed events in 2020, for responses **by 15 December 2019**. The CSO urged Member States to prioritise the provision of dates of meetings in 2020 to the Secretariat.

**13.2 Study of the Secretariat’s staffing & budget needs (Secretariat/Indonesia)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted Indonesia’s update that it had received draft Terms of Reference for the study from the Secretariat and they would be finalized by the end of **December 2019**.

The CSO noted the update from the Secretariat on progress on amending staff rules and regulations, including a review of the host country agreement and a proposed Code of Conduct.

**13.3 IORA Secretariat’s costed Annual Operational Plan (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the Secretariat on its costed Annual Operational Plan and that the Secretariat required Member State notice of upcoming events in 2020 to accurately cost the plan. The CSO requested that the Secretariat write to all Member States requesting these dates as per item 13.1.

**13.4 Options for establishing legal frameworks in the Indian Ocean Region (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India that it was endeavoring to contact RIS India for a draft paper and would work with the Secretariat to ensure that a draft paper would be ready in advance of the 25th IORAG meeting on 12 December 2019.

**13.5 IORA’s role in the Indo-Pacific (CIOS/India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the CIOS that the paper was under development and would be circulated in due course.

**13.6 Streamlining decision-making processes through sub-structures (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by South Africa on the paper on streamlining decision-making processes through sub-structures. The CSO requested the Secretariat to recirculate the paper to Member States **by 15 November 2019** for input **by 17 January 2020**.

**13.7 Report: Troika Visit at the IORA Secretariat, 5-6 August 2019 (South Africa/Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by South Africa on the TROIKA visit to the Secretariat on 5-7 August 2019, including that the Troika would continue to oversee nine key deliverables that were identified for implementation by the Secretariat.

The CSO thanked the TROIKA for its visit to the IORA Secretariat.

The CSO welcomed the UAE’s update that its secondment of a Director into the IORA Secretariat would commence in the near future.

The CSO noted Singapore’s suggestion of provision of capacity building support related to public financial and project management directly at the Secretariat in Mauritius, open to the IORA Secretariat and Member States, and looked forward to further information in due course.

**13.8 Offer of India to provide an IT specialist to support the Secretariat (India)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India that its secondment of an IT specialist to support the Secretariat would commence by the end of 2019.

**13.9 Future Role of the CIOS (India/Mauritius/South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by India that the paper on the Future Role of the CIOS was under development. The CSO agreed that further consideration of the draft paper was required, and agreed that a smaller group of Member States would consider the paper, including issues such as draft Terms of Reference for the CIOS and funding arrangements. The final paper would be prepared for consideration at the CSO in June 2020.

**13.10 Status of Institutional arrangements with other regional organisations and the UN (CIOS/Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by CIOS. The grid of Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) within IORA had been circulated to Member States on 30 October 2019. The CSO requested Member States to provide feedback on the document **by 6 December 2019** to the Secretariat.

**13.10.1 Food and Agriculture Association (FAO)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on engagement with FAO.

**13.10.2 United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR)**

*Outcome:* TheCSO noted the update on the engagement with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).

**13.10.3 Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO (IOC-UNESCO)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on engagement with IOC-UNESCO.

**13.10.4 UN Committee on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on engagement with UNCTAD.

**13.10.5 African Union (AU)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on engagement with African Union (AU).

**13.10.6 Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on engagement with Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

**13.10.7 Indian Ocean Commission (IOC)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat that it was not possible for IORA to obtain observer status at the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), and requested the Secretariat to continue to engage the IOC to identify areas of mutual interest.

**13.10.8 International Seabed Authority (The Authority)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update on cooperation with the ISA.

**13.10.9 Cooperation with the World Bank (WB)**

*Outcome:* TheCSO noted the update by the Secretariat on the engagement with the World Bank (WB).

**13.10.10 International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) (UAE/Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the UAE that it was in a position to facilitate engagement between IORA and IRENA, in conjunction with the IORA Secretariat.

**14. FINANCE & ADMINISTRATION**

**14.1 Report: Sub-Committee on Finance (SCF), 5 November 2019, Abu Dhabi, UAE (Chair of SCF)**

*Outcome:* The CSO endorsed the Chairperson’s Report from the Sub-Committee on Finance including its recommendations, and recommended its endorsement by the COM.

**14.2 Consideration of the Paper on options for non-payment of membership fees (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the draft paper on options for non-payment of membership fees, and that more time was needed to consider the paper. The CSO endorsed the suggestion by India that a group of interested Member States be convened to examine this issue, and the related issues of increasing membership dues and how to move forward with outstanding amounts in arrears.

**14.3 IORA Special Fund**

**14.3.1 Update: Review of the Administrative Arrangements of the Special Fund (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from the Secretariat that the updated Administrative Arrangements of the Special Fund had been circulated to Member States, and requested Member States to provide inputs to the Secretariat **by 6 December 2019** so that a revised draft could be recirculated by the end of the year.

**14.4 Proposals for future funding**

**14.4.1 IORA Experts’ Meeting to Enhance Intra-Regional Trade and Investment, 5-6 December 2019, Mauritius (Mauritius)**

*Outcome:* Refer to item 6.3.

**14.4.2 New proposal: Publication Grant for Research Unit, IORA (CIOS)**

*Outcome:* See item 9.8.

**14.4.3 New proposal: High Level Capacity Building Programme on Gender Mainstreaming in the Six Priority Areas of IORA (Mauritius)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the proposal by Mauritius to hold a capacity building event on gender mainstreaming, and that a Special Fund application will be circulated to Member States in due course for intersessional approval.

**14.5 Options to increase Membership dues (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* See item 14.2.

**15. IORA SPECIAL PROGRAMMES**

**15.1 Update: IORA Nelson Mandela Internship Programme (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO agreed to the proposed edits to the IORA Nelson Mandela Internship Programme proposal for implementation. The CSO requested the Secretariat to circulate the final approved Programme and proceed accordingly.

The CSO recommended that the COM endorse the proposal to have the first programme commence on International Nelson Mandela Day on 18 July 2020.

The CSO welcomed Sri Lanka’s confirmation that it had committed an amount of USD10,000 to the Nelson Mandela Internship Fund, and other commitments that had been received from South Africa (USD10,000), the UAE (USD15,000) and China (USD50,000).

**15.2 Update: Indian Ocean Champion Concept (South Africa)**

*Outcome:* The CSO endorsed the Concept Note for recommendation to the COM.

**15.3 Preparations for IORA Day, 7 March 2020 (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted comments from Mauritius regarding the date of the Secretariat’s proposed commemoration of IORA Day on 7 March 2020 in Mauritius and requested it to plan its IORA Day celebration accordingly.

**16. NEW PROPOSALS BY MEMBER STATES (if any) (Chair)**

*Outcome:* In addition to proposals discussed above, the CSO noted that Seychelles would soon be circulating a proposal for an Ocean Knowledge Education Program to strengthen the Blue Economy concept in the IORA region.

**17. REVISION OF SUBSIDIARY INSTRUMENTS OF THE IORA CHARTER** **(Secretariat)**

**17.1 Rules of Procedure**

*Outcome:* The CSO endorsed an updated Rules of Procedure with a recommendation that the COM approve the revised version*.*

**18. PREPARATIONS FOR THE 19TH COUNCIL OF MINISTERS’ MEETING, ABU DHABI, 7 NOVEMBER 2019, DISCUSSION ON:**

**18.1 Draft COM Agenda (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO finalised the draft Agenda of the 19th COM.

**18.2 Draft Abu Dhabi Communiqué (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO amended and adopted the Abu Dhabi Communiqué for recommendation and endorsement by the COM.

**18.3 Signature of MOUs (SME AND SEARCH & RESCUE) (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update by the IORA Secretariat on the signature status of the MOU by Member States on SME and Search and Rescue, including that Tanzania would sign the SME MOU on 7 November 2019 at the COM. The CSO encouraged Member States that had not yet signed the instruments to sign as soon as possible.

The CSO requested the Secretariat to write to Member States that have not signed the MOUs on SMEs and Search and Rescue, requesting reasons for non-signature **by 20 December 2019**, and to report back to the CSO on this issue.

**18.4 Signature of Instrument of Acceptance by Maldives (Secretariat)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the Secretariat’s update that the Maldives would sign the Instrument of Acceptance during the COM.

**18.5 Signature of the Jakarta Concord by Oman (Oman)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from Oman that it had initialed the Jakarta Concord during the COM in Jakarta in 2017, and that the Concord was currently proceeding through Oman’s ratification process. The CSO also noted the update from the UAE that it would not be signing the Jakarta Concord during the COM.

**19. PREPARATIONS FOR THE EXPO 2020 (UAE)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted the update from the UAE on preparations for IORA’s participation in Expo 2020, including a proposed event to mark IORA Day on 7 March 2021, and ongoing consideration of the possibility of an IORA Pavilion during Expo 2020.

**20. NEXT MEETING: 10TH IORA BI-ANNUAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF SENIOR OFFICIALS, 2020 (UAE)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted that the next Bi-Annual Meeting of the CSO would take place tentatively in Fujairah, UAE, in June or July 2020.

**21. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (AOB) (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO noted Bangladesh’s call at the third Ministerial Blue Economy Conference in Dhaka for another Member State to host the fourth Ministerial Blue Economy Conference, and requested the Secretariat to reach out to Member States in this regard.

**22. ADOPTION OF THE DECISION REPORT AND CLOSING REMARKS (Chair)**

*Outcome:* The CSO adopted the Decision Report of the meeting.

The CSO noted the closing remarks by the Chair.

\*\*\*