

Indian Ocean Rim Association

MODERNISING TRADE IN THE INDIAN OCEAN RIM - CONFERENCE

Capital Pearls Hotel, Durban, South Africa
17-18 June 2019

CONCEPT NOTE

Including four elements:

1. *The Modernising Trade in the Indian Ocean Rim Conference, for all attendees*
2. *The Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) meeting, for WGTI delegates only*
3. *The Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE) meeting, for WGWEE delegates only*
4. *The Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) meeting, for IORBF delegates only.*

Side event:

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 100th Anniversary Regional Event

Associated workshop:

UN Women Research Validation Workshop on Women's Economic Empowerment

Summary

This conference will explore emerging opportunities for boosting trade and investment in the Indian Ocean Rim region, and accompanying synergies with IORA's agenda for the economic empowerment of women. Day 1 will deliver an update on trends and initiatives in the modernisation of global and regional trade and investment and women's economic empowerment, and also present a range of ideas on how these trends can be replicated within IORA. Day 2 of the conference will convene official delegates to IORA's private sector arm, the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF), as well as the IORA working groups on Trade and Investment and Women's Economic Empowerment. These three groups will consider how to promote business, trade and women's empowerment within an IORA context and advance their respective work plans.

Additional events will be held by the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) and UN Women. The ICC will host a 100th Anniversary Regional Event to deepen the ICC's engagement in the Indian Ocean Rim region and highlight the ICC's thought leadership through two panels on global inequality and climate change. UN Women will host a Research Validation Workshop focussed on two draft pieces of research on women's economic empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim region. This workshop is aimed at members of the IORA Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment and the Technical Advisory Committee for the UN Women project (attendance to the workshop is by invitation only and participants will be expected to read the research in advance).

The conference is aligned with the commitment of IORA Member States to implement the Jakarta Concord and IORA Action Plan 2017-2021, as adopted at the 20th Anniversary Commemoration

Celebrations in Jakarta (March 2017), the Balaclava Ministerial Declaration on Women's Economic Empowerment – A Prerequisite for Sustainable Development of 2018, the Joint Declaration on the IORA Business Community to Build Partnerships for a Sustainable and Equitable Economic Growth of 2017 and the IORA Economic Declaration of 2014.

Background Information

The fourth industrial revolution (or Industry 4.0) refers to increasing automation, platform economies and data exchange in manufacturing technologies that facilitate new business models and value-producing opportunities. Fostering inclusive growth is particularly pertinent for small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs), which form the backbone of many regional economies and represent over 90% of firms and over 70% of employment in most countries, but which may be disconnected from new technologies. The Joint Declaration on the IORA Business Community to Build Partnerships for a Sustainable and Equitable Economic Growth of March 2017 recognised the importance of public-private dialogue in strengthening the collaboration and partnerships necessary to increase trade and investment for the benefit of businesses and communities across the Indian Ocean.

Likewise, despite having less access to technology, women around the world use digital platforms to their advantage by accessing markets, lowering costs of entry and exit, simplifying buying and selling, overcoming procedural obstacles and encouraging innovative and entrepreneurial activities.

The IORA *Balaclava Ministerial Declaration on Women's Economic Empowerment and Gender Equality as a Prerequisite for Sustainable Development* (2018) identified intensifying information and communication technology as a major paradigm shift that requires further attention by IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners. The Declaration states that IORA Member States will: “*adopt concrete measures and innovative policies that aim to promote women's and girls' participation and skills development in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, including Information and Communication Technologies in the light of the looming fourth industrial revolution by creating an enabling environment as well as providing incentives to women and girls innovators; including the setting up of appropriate and relevant mentorship programmes and initiatives for the young girls to enable them to harness their full potential.*”

Aims and Objectives of the Conference

This two-day conference aims to advance the IORA trade and investment facilitation and women's economic empowerment agendas by:

- identifying opportunities within and challenges of the Indian Ocean Rim's future economy with a focus on the fourth industrial revolution, trade modernisation and digitisation;
- engaging the private sector via regional chambers of commerce and alongside government officials to consider policy, regulatory and initiatives that will foster regional prosperity;
- creating a mutually supportive environment for capacity building within, and across, the IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners with a focus on women's economic empowerment and practical trade facilitation tools; and
- leveraging synergies by co-convening the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) alongside the core IORA bodies for promoting trade and investment (Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) and Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWE)) on Day 2.

Format of the Conference

Day 1 of the conference is directed at government and private sector representatives from IORA Member States and Dialogue Partners, such as:

- officials from government departments of trade and industry and gender ministries
- local, national and international Chambers of Commerce;
- trade and investment promotion organisations;
- digital industry players (such as logistics firms, banks, infrastructure providers and investors);
- members of National Trade Facilitation Committees; and
- women's entrepreneur groups.

Day 1 aims to showcase the Indian Ocean as a region of growing economic importance as well as identifying emerging trends such as changing business ecosystems, the fourth industrial revolution, and tools to reduce barriers to increased regional trade. These tools include the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement, innovative digital apps and online trading platforms, new dispute and arbitration mechanisms, and promoting women's entrepreneurship.

Day 1 will culminate with a networking cocktail for both business and government representatives. The first day will be facilitated by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCI - through funding from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) and the government of South Africa as convener of the WGTI and IORBF, and current IORA Chair.

Day 2 will convene the IORA Business Forum, hosted by Ms Judi Nwokedi, Chair of IORBF. A key focus of the IORBF will be the formulation of considered recommendations from the private sector to governments on how to boost regional trade and investment among IORA member states and dialogue partners.

Day 2 also comprises the formal meetings of the WGTI and WGWEE attended by official representatives designated by IORA National Focal Points. Officials are encouraged to attend all elements of Day 1 to facilitate engagement between the public and private sectors and to strengthen national and regional business enabling environments as drivers of economic growth. South Africa will host the WGTI which will consider its forward work plan and Terms of Reference for the first time. Australia will host the second meeting of the WGWEE and will co-chair the meeting with Mauritius. The working group meeting will include opportunities to hear from IORA co-collaborators in the region (UN Women, Human Sciences Research Council, International Trade Centre) on their recent work and their resulting recommendations for action. The WGWEE will consider these recommendations for inclusion in its work plan.

Expected Outcomes

This two-day conference is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- revitalisation of the IORA trade and investment agenda, including via stronger linkages with regional chambers of commerce
- a road map to formation of an IORA Women's Business Forum in consultation with the Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum
- clarity on a broad framework for the US-IOA partnership on women's economic empowerment
- agreement on draft Terms of Reference and key elements of a Work plan for the Working Group on Trade and Investment

- progress review of the IORA WGWEE work plan including priority activities for implementation.

Benefits to participants

The ideas and networks generated via this trade modernisation conference and the meetings of the IORBF, WGTI and WGWEE will:

- expose participants to cutting edge ideas in the areas of trade and investment facilitation;
- inject energy and momentum into regional trade and investment efforts, across both private and public sectors
- shape the WGTI and WGWEE agenda and work plans, in particular ensuring that their work is complementary; and
- build active working groups with aligned programs that build IORA's cohesion and influence.

Administrative and logistical arrangements

A draft Agenda for the conference has been circulated separately.

A detailed Administrative Arrangements document, including registration details, will be circulated shortly, as will further details about the ICC side event and associated UN Women workshop. To express interest in being invited to the UN Women workshop please contact jhinni.awotar@iora.int.

For all other conference-related queries, including on the WGTI, IORBF and WGWEE, please contact the IORA Secretariat at jhinni.awotar@iora.int.

Modernising Trade in the Indian Ocean Rim Conference

Including four elements:

1. *The Modernising Trade in the Indian Ocean Rim Conference, for all attendees*
2. *The Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI) meeting, for IORA trade officials only*
3. *The Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWE) meeting, for IORA women's empowerment officials only, held concurrently with the WGTI*
4. *The Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) meeting, for business representatives only.*

Side event:

International Chamber of Commerce (ICC) 100th Anniversary Regional Event

Associated workshop:

UN Women Research Validation Workshop on Women's Economic Empowerment

**Capital Pearls Hotel, Durban, South Africa
17-18 June 2019**

DRAFT AGENDA

Day 1: Monday 17 June 2019

Modernising Trade in the Indian Ocean Rim Conference

07:30-09:30

Registration of Participants

09:30-10:00

Opening

Welcome Address by [senior representative of govt of South Africa]
Greeting by Dr Nomvuyo Nokwe, Secretary-General of IORA

10:00 -11:15

Session 1: Opportunities and Challenges for Trade and Investment in the Indian Ocean Rim

Chaired by South Africa

This session will set out the current status of trade and investment in the Indian Ocean Rim and key trends such as the fourth industrial revolution and digitisation.

Presentation by South Africa: reviewing IORA's trade and investment agenda - a view from the Chair

Presentation by the Centre for International Private Enterprise

Presentation by the World Bank. Short Q&A (10 mins)

11:15-11:30

Coffee Break

11:30-12:45

Session 2: Promoting Trade Facilitation

Chaired by Australia

This capacity building session will provide an update on the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement including current status of ratification, examples of customs compliance and overcoming barriers to trade.

Presentation by Mauritius: Looking Ahead: Trade and Investment in IORA in 2025 – the Coordinating Country perspective

The WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement

Presenter: Professor Peter Draper, Executive Director, Institute for International Trade, The University of Adelaide (Australia)

Presentation from the Global Coalition for Trade Facilitation (<https://www.tradefacilitation.org/country-projects/>)

Presentation from KPMG on Trade Facilitation (tbc)[Emerson]
Short Q&A (10 mins)

12:45-13:45

Lunch

13:45-14:45

Session 3: Tools for promoting regional trade

Chaired by Mauritius

Showcasing practical tools from Member States:

- the Trade Community System
(www.tradecommunitysystem.com.au presented by the Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry/PwC)
- the IORA Dispute Resolution and Arbitration Mechanism
(presented by Mauritius).

Short Q&A to follow to identify barriers to trade and investment in the region and recommendations to overcome these.

14:45-15:15

Afternoon Tea

15:15-17:00

Session 4: Tools for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment

Chaired by Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Reflecting the importance of women's economic empowerment in achieving inclusive and sustainable economic growth, this session will include presentations and tools businesses can adopt

Presentation by UN Women on Women's Empowerment Principles

Presentation by International Trade Centre (ITC) (drawing from the SME Competitiveness Outlook 2018 Report and SheTrades platform)

Short Q&A (10 mins)

19:00

Networking cocktail hosted by the Department of Trade and Industry, Republic of South Africa

For all participants

Day 2: Tuesday 18 June 2019

Participants will register to attend different meetings on Day 2. Draft agendas below. Venues TBC.

Tuesday 18 June 2019

Business community	Trade and investment officials	Women's economic empowerment officials
09:00-13:00 IORBF	09:00-13:00 WGTI	09:00-13:00 WGWEE
13:00-14:00 Lunch	13:00-14:00 Lunch	13:00-14:00 Lunch
14:00-17:30 ICC side event	14:00-17:30 WGTI continues	14:00-17:30 WGWEE continues

Day 2: Business community

Indian Ocean Rim Business Forum (IORBF) Meeting

09:00-09:15 Coffee and Registration of Participants
FOR NOMINATED IORBF DELEGATES ONLY

09:15-09:20 *Group photograph*

09:20-13:00 **IORBF meeting**

Host
Ms Judi Nwokedi
Senior Vice President of AREVA,
Chief Operating Officer and Executive Director, Tourism Investment
Corporation Limited
Chair, IORBF

Detailed agenda to follow.

13:00-14:00 *Lunch*

Side event:**International Chamber of Commerce: 100th Anniversary Event**

14:00-17:30 A regional event hosted by the ICC to include:

Opening and keynote addresses
Panel one: Stop the rise in global inequality
Panel two: Make climate change everyone's business
Closing

Day 2: Trade and investment officials

Working Group on Trade and Investment (WGTI)

09:00-09:15

Coffee and Registration of Participants
FOR NOMINATED WGTI DELEGATES ONLY

09:15-11:00

Session 1: Revisiting and Revitalising the Working Group on Trade and Investment – role and mandate

Chaired by South Africa

An opportunity for Member States to discuss the WGTI's role and draft Terms of Reference, drawing on discussions from Day 1.

Includes group photo at 10:00

Presentation by South Africa: Discussion of the Terms of Reference of the Working Group on Trade and Investment

11:00-11:30

Coffee Break

11:30-13:00

Session 2: Private sector engagement

Chaired by South Africa

An opportunity for Member States to hear from IORBF Representatives on business priorities in the region, and to discuss how business can best work with government to promote regional growth in trade and investment.

This session could include a presentation by the IORBF Chair on the IORBF's deliberations, including any recommendations for the WGTI

13:00-14:00

Lunch

14:00-15:30

Session 3 Revisiting and Revitalising the Working Group on Trade and Investment – work plan

Chaired by Mauritius and South Africa

An opportunity for Member States to discuss the WGTI's work plan.

15:30-16:00

Coffee break

16:00-17:30

Session 4: Next steps

Chaired by Mauritius and South Africa

This session will summarise the day's proceedings, including key elements for Mauritius as Coordinating Country for Trade and Investment Facilitation to report to the IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) meeting on 19-20 June 2019, next meeting date, and any key deliverables to be achieved before the IORA Council of Ministers meeting in October 2019 (TBC).

Day 2: Women's economic empowerment officials

Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment (WGWEE)

09:00-09:15	Coffee and Registration of Participants FOR NOMINATED WGWEE DELEGATES ONLY
09:15-11:00	Session 1: Updates on WEE activities <i>Chaired by Mauritius</i> Presentation by UAE on Women's Financial Inclusion (10 mins) Presentation by Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) on blue economy research (30 mins) Presentation by UN Women on project webinars and research (30 mins) Discussion (35 mins)
11:00-11:30	<i>Group Photo and Coffee Break</i>
11:30-13:00	Session 2: Taking Forward the Work Plan <i>Chaired by Australia</i> <i>With the WGWEE work plan circulated out of session, and following the updates on activities given in Session 1, this session invites member states to nominate to implement currently unallocated projects, suggest new projects and consider next work steps.</i> Discussion.
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch</i>
14:00-15:30	Session 3: Private sector engagement <i>Chaired by Australia</i> <i>In this session Member States could discuss how IORA can help harness the private sector in the region to promote women's economic empowerment, including through the IORA Women's Business Forum and Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs).</i> Presentation by the IORBF Chair on the IORBF's deliberations, including any recommendations for the WGWEE. Brief recap from ACCI on Tools for Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment (Session 4, Day 1). Presentation by the US on WEE support, including Women's Business Forum. Discussion.
15:30-16:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>

16:00-17:30

Session 4: WGWEE role, composition and next steps

Chaired by Mauritius (WGWEE role, composition) and Australia (next steps)

In this session Member States will:

- *review the progress of the WGWEE to date*
- *discuss which Member will act as Coordinating Country for WEE for 2019-20 (two-year term of current Coordinating Countries expires end 2019)*
- *finalise discussions on the WGWEE Work Plan, if necessary*
- *summarise key elements for Australia to report to the IORA Committee of Senior Officials (CSO) meeting on 19-20 June 2019*
- *give preferences for the next meeting date*
- *and highlight any key deliverables to be achieved before the IORA Council of Ministers meeting in October 2019.*

Presentation by Mauritius on what successful gender mainstreaming looks like in IORA, and whether IORA is on track.

Discussion.

Wednesday 19 June 2019

Associated workshop:

UN Women Research Validation Workshop on Women's Economic Empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim Region

09:00-16:00

This Workshop will examine in detail two draft pieces of research on women's economic empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim region being conducted by UN Women through the 'Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment in the Indian Ocean Rim' project, supported by Australia.

It is for members of the IORA Working Group on Women's Economic Empowerment and the Technical Advisory Committee for the UN Women project.

Attendance is by invitation only and participants will be expected to read the research in advance. To express your interest in attending please contact jhinini.awotar@iora.int

Detailed concept note and agenda to follow.
