

Dear Excellencies,

First of all I would like to thank the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the Italy-IORA Committee for this kind invitation and opportunity to speak in such an important forum, which represents a model in transnational cooperation.

As stated by the Minister of State H.E. Ahmed Ali Al Sayegh, chairing the 20th IORA Council of Ministers Meeting in December 2020: “As we continue to address the challenge of a global pandemic, the UAE is deeply appreciative of the cooperative response of all Member States and Dialogue Partners of IORA”.

It is clear to all of us, that cooperation is the key instrument for the international relations to seek a fast, sustainable recovery from the pandemic, and UAE from the beginning has been on the frontline of this cooperation, by sending humanitarian aids to 134 countries with 1789 tons of medical supplies, and Italy was one of the first countries to receive UAE aids, in April 2020.

We share the belief with Italy that IORA plays a key role in the framework of the regional architecture to address global challenges such as climate change, sustainable development and maritime security, in a multilateral setting.

The UAE is committed to promoting the role of IORA and has chosen to focus on the three key priority areas of Maritime Safety and Security, Trade and Investment Facilitation and Tourism and Cultural Exchange, as well as the two focus areas of the Blue Economy and Women’s Economic Empowerment.

These are all subjects we are happy to share with many partners but especially with Italy who is well renowned in all these sectors.

We also praise Italy’s efforts to develop a stronger collaboration with IORA, with the means of its public and private organizations, and are sure about its contribution to the widening of relations between the Mediterranean region and IORA member states, while promoting growth, sustainable development and regional economic cooperation.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize the spirit of cooperation that is leading the work within this forum, and I’m sure that UAE and Italy will work strongly together in the frame of the Indian Ocean Rim Association as they did in so many other fields and occasions.

Dear Excellencies, thank you all for your kind attention and wish all the success in upcoming discussion.